



THE  
LADY  
MARRIED











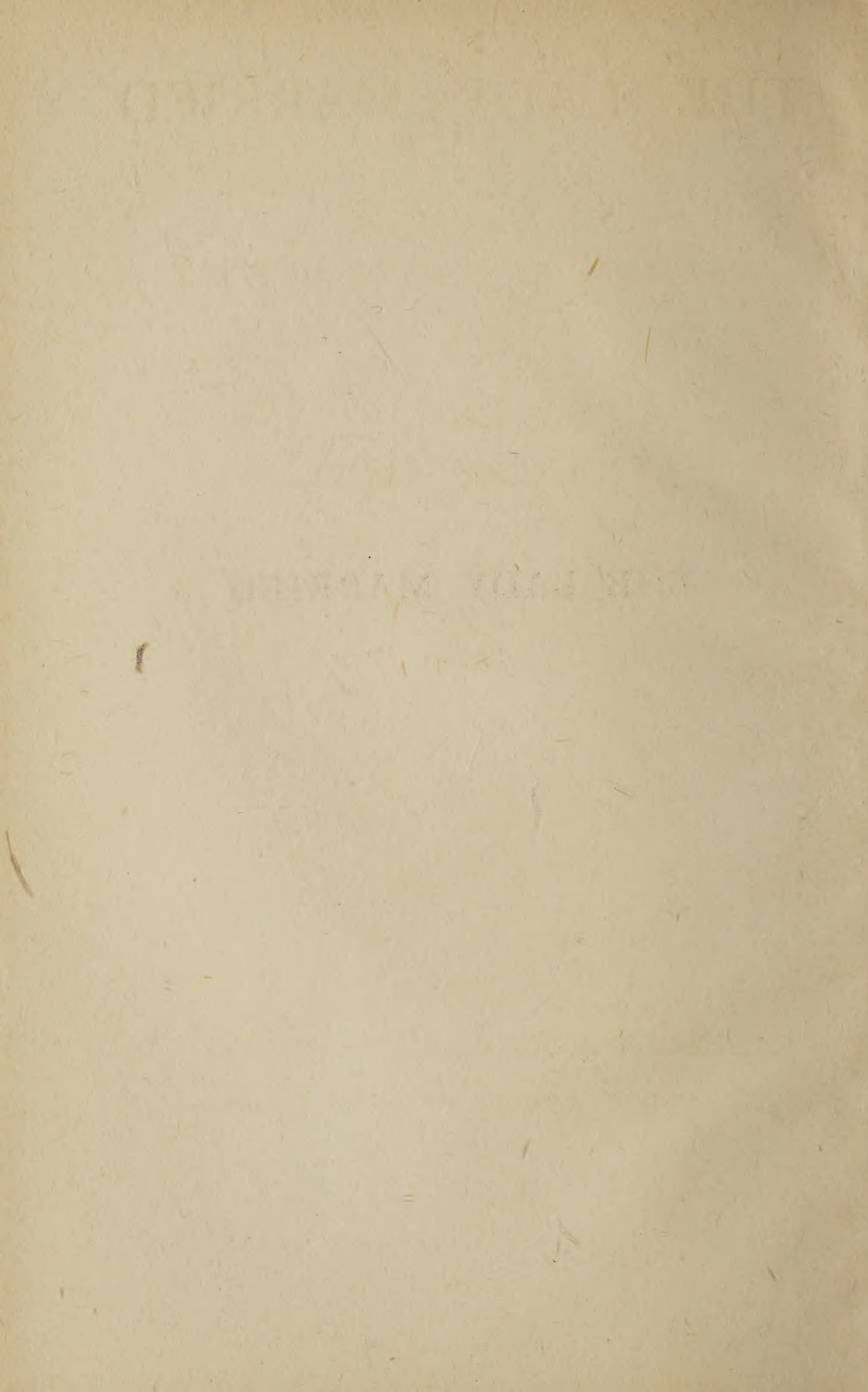
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## THE LADY MARRIED





# THE LADY MARRIED

*A SEQUEL TO  
THE LADY OF THE DECORATION*

BY  
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TORONTO

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*On the High Sea, June 1911.*

MATE,

You once told me, before you went to Italy, that after having been my intimate relative all these years you had drawn a red line through the word "surprise." Restore the abused thing to its own at once. You will need it before you read another word of this letter.

I have left Kentucky, after six years of stay-at-home happiness, and once again I am on my way to Japan. This time in wifely disobedience to Jack's wishes.

What do you think that same Jack has "been and gone and done"? Of course, he



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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is right. That is the provoking part of Jack. It always turns out that he is in the right. Two months ago he left for some place in China, which, from its ungodly name, should be in the furthestmost parts of a wilderness.

Perhaps you have snatched enough time from saving the kiddies from a premature end in Como to read a headline or so in the home papers. If by some wonderful chance between baby prattle, bumps, and measles they have given you a moment's respite, then you know that the Government has grown decidedly restless for fear the energetic and enterprising bubonic or pneumonic germ might take passage or play stowaway on some of the ships from the Orient. It is fortifying against invasion. And that same Government, knowing Jack's indomitable determination to learn everything knowable about any germ's private life and character, asked him to join several other men it is sending out to get information—provided,



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## THE LADY MARRIED

---

of course, the germ does not get them first.

Jack read me the official-looking document one night between puffs of his after-dinner pipe.

Another surprise awaits you. For once in my life I had nothing to say. Possibly it's just as well for the good of the cause that the honourable writer of the letter could not see just how my thoughts looked.

I glanced about our little den, aglow with soft lights. Everything in it seemed to smile. Well as you know it, Mate, I do not believe even you realise the blissfulness of the hours of quiet happiness we have spent there. With the great know-it-all old world shut out, for joyful years we have dwelt together in a home-made Paradise. And yet just then it seemed as if I were dwelling in a home-made other place.

The difference in the speed of time depends on whether Love is your guest or not.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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The thought of the briefest interruption to my content made me feel like cold storage. Too well I know a break in happiness is sometimes hard to mend. The blossom doesn't return to the tree after the storm, however beautiful the sunshine. The awful fear of the faintest echo of past sorrow made my heart as numb as a snow-ball. To the old terror of loneliness was added fear for Jack's safety; but I did not do what you naturally would prophesy. After seeing the look on Jack's face I changed my mind, and my protest was the silent kind that says so much. It was lost. Already Jack had gone into one of those trances from which he suffers when there is a possibility of bearding a brand new microbe in its den. In body he was in a padded chair, with all the comforts of home and a charming wife within speaking distance. In spirit he was in dust-laden China, joyfully following the trail of the wandering germ. Later on, when he came to, we



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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talked it over. I truly lived up to your warnings on the danger of impetuosity, when I choked off every hasty word and gave my consent for Jack to go. Then I cried half the night because I had given it.

We both know that, long ago, Jack headed for the topmost rung of a very tall scientific ladder. Sometimes my enthusiasm as chief booster and encourager has failed, when his ambition meant absence and risk. Though I have known women who specialised in renunciation till they were the only happy people in the neighbourhood, its charms have never lured me into any violent sacrifice. Here was my chance, and I firmly refused to be the millstone to ornament Jack's neck.

You might know, Mate, that I was hoping all the time that he would find it quite impossible to leave such a nice bidable wife at home ; but I learn something new about Jack every day. After a rather heated discussion it was decided that I should stay in the little

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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home. That is, the heat and the discussion was all on my side. The decision lay in the set of Jack's mouth, which won a cruel victory over the tenderness in his eyes. He thought the risks of the journey too great for me, the hardships of the rough life too much. Dear me! will men never learn that hardship and risk are double cousins to loneliness, and not even related to love by marriage?

But just as well paint on water as argue with a scientist when he has reached a conclusion.

Besides, said Jack, the fatherly Government has no intention that petticoats, even hobbled ones, should be flitting around, while the habits and the methods of the busy insect were being examined through a microscope or telescope. The choice of instrument depending of course upon the activity of the bug.

Black Charity was to be my chief of police



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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and comforter in general. Parties—house, card and otherwise—were to be my diversion, and I was to make any little trips I cared for. Well, that's just what I *am* doing. Of course there might be a difference of opinion as to whether a journey from Kentucky to Japan was a *little* trip.

I am held by a vague sadness to-day. Possibly it's because I am not certain as to Jack's attitude, when he learns through my letter which is sailing along with me, that I am going to Japan to be as near him as possible. I hope he will appreciate my thoughtfulness in saving him all the bother of saying No. Or it may be that my slightly dampened spirits come from the discussion I am still having with myself, as to whether it is the part of a dutiful wife to present herself a wiggling sacrifice to science, or whether science should attend to its business, and lead not into temptation the scientifically inclined heads of peaceful households.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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You'll say the decision of what was best lay with Jack. Honey, there's the error of your mortal mind! In a question like that my spouse is as one-sided as a civil war veteran. Say "Germ hunt!" to Jack, and it's like dangling a gaudy fly before a hungry carp.

I saw Jack off at the station, and went back to the little house. Charity had sent the cook home, and with her own hands served all the beloved dainties of my long-ago childhood, trying to coax me into forgetfulness.

As you'll remember, Mate, dinner has always been the happiest hour of the day in our small domain. Now? Well, everything was just the same. The only difference was Jack. And the half circle of bare tablecloth opposite me was about as cheerful as a snowy afternoon at the North Pole. For awhile I found some diversion in trying to soothe Charity's indignation at Jack's going. I tried to explain to her that it was necessary for him to learn



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## THE LADY MARRIED

---

everything possible connected with his profession. I quite warmed to my subject. "Mr. Jack feels that he must know all about this awful disease, Charity, even if it takes him to the other side of the world. He has read and studied about it till it has become an obsession." Charity eyed me suspiciously. I looked at her squarely and asked, "Charity, did you ever have an obsession?"

"Who, me? Lord, no, honey. I'se done got religion, and dat's all I kin wrastle with in one lifetime. Look here, chile. Dem heathen words is gittin' you all mixed up. I'se gwine to put you to bed."

You should have seen her, Mate, wagging her old grey head as she went upstairs, muttering something about "Marse Jack better stayed at home and worked wif people whose pa's he knowed, 'stead of rackin' off cross de ocean to 'sociate wif dat po' white trash, what didn't know no better than to wear their night-shirts in de daytime."

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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I wandered around the house, but every time I turned a corner there was a memory waiting to greet me. The merriest of them seemed to be covered with a chilly shadow, and all were pale and ghostly. All night I lay awake playing at the old game of mental solitaire, and keeping tryst with the wind, which seemed to tap with unseen fingers at my window and sigh,

“Then let come what come may,  
I shall have had my day.”

Is it possible, Mate, that my glorious day which I thought had barely tipped the hour of noon is already lengthening into the shadows of evening?

It was foolish, but for the small comfort I got out of it I turned on the light and looked inside my wedding ring. Time has worn it a bit, but the letters which spell “*My Lady of the Decoration*,” spelled more poignantly than ever the old-time thrill into my heart.

What’s the use of tying your heart-strings



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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around a man and then have ambition slip the knot and leave you all a-quiver?

Far be it from me to stand in Jack's way if germ-stalking is necessary to his success. Just the same I could have spent profitable moments reading the Burial Service over every microbe, home-grown and foreign.

Really, Mate, I have conscientiously tried every plan Jack proposed, and a few of my own. It was no use. That day-after-Christmas feeling promptly suppressed any effort towards contentment.

At first there was a certain exhilaration in catching pace with the gay whirl which for so long had been passed by for homier things. There was a time, as you well know, when the pace of that same whirl was never swift enough for me ; but my taste for it has gone, and it was like trying to do a two-step to a funeral march. For once in my life I knew the real meaning of that poor old worn-to-a-frazzle Call of the East.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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for its dominant note was the call of love.

I heard it above the clink of the tea-cups. It was in the swish of every silk petticoat. If I went to church, theatre, or concert, the call of that germ-ridden spot of the unholy name beat into my brain with the persistency of a tomtom on a Chinese holiday.

Say what you will, Mate, it once took all my courage to leave those I loved best and go to far-away Japan. Now it required more pluck than I could dig up to stay—when the best was on the other side of the Pacific.

The struggle was easy and swift. The tomtom won, and I am on my way to be next-door neighbour to Jack.

Those whom it concerned here were away from home, so I told no one good-bye, saving everybody so much wasted advice. If there was a tax on advice the necessities of life



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## THE LADY MARRIED

---

would not come so high. Charity followed me to the train, protesting to the last that "Marse Jack gwine doubt her velocity when she tell him de truf bout her lady going a gaddin' off by hersef, and payin' no mind to her ol' mammy's prosterations." I asked her to come with me as maid. She refused. Said her church was to have "an ice-cream sociable, and she had to fry de fish."

This letter will find you joyfully busy with the babies and the only man. Blest woman that you are. But I know you. I have a feeling that you have a few remarks to make. So hurry up. Let us get it off our minds. Then I can better tell you what I am doing.

Something is going to happen. It usually does when I am around. Moreover, I have been asked to chaperon a young girl whose face and name spell romance. If I were seeking occupation here's the opportunity knocking my door into splinters. The men are wild about her.





*Still at Sea, June 1911.*

ANY time that you are out of a job and want to overwork all your faculties and a few emotions, just you try chaperoning a young room-mate answering to the name of Sada San, who is one half American dash, and the other half the unnamable wichery of a Japanese woman—a girl with the notes of a lark in her voice when she sings to the soft twang of an old guitar.

If, too, you are seeking specimens for psychological study of the effect of such a combination on people, good, middlin', and otherwise, I would suggest a Pacific liner as offering a kind of fifty-seven varieties, that would make Herr Heinz pea-green with envy.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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The last twinge of conscience I had over coming died a cheerful death. I'd do it again. For not only is romance surcharging the air, but fate gives promise of weaving an intricate pattern in the story of this maid whose life is just fairly begun, and whom the luck of the road has given me as travelling mate. Now, remembering a few biffs fate has given me, I have no burning desire to meddle with her business. Neither am I hungering for responsibilities. But what are you going to say to yourself, when a young girl with a look in her eyes you would wish your daughter to have, unhesitatingly gives you a letter addressed at large to some "Christian Sister"! You read it to find it's from her home pastor requesting just a little companionship for a "tender young soul who is trying her wings for the first time in the big and beautiful world!" I have a very private opinion about reading my title clear to the Christian Sister business, but no woman with a heart as big as a pinch of snuff could resist



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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giving her very best to this slip of a winsome maid, who so confidently asks for it. Especially if the "Sister" has any knowledge of the shadows lurking in the beautiful world.

Mate, these steamers, as they sail from shore to shore, are like giant theatres. Every trip is an impromptu drama where comedy, farce, and often startling tragedy have large speaking parts. The revelation of human nature in the original package is funny and pathetic. Amusement is always on tap and life stories are just hanging out of the port-holes waiting to attack your sympathy or tickle your funny-bone. But you'd have to travel far to find the beginning of a story so heaped up with romantic interest as that of Sada San, as she told it to me one long, lazy afternoon, as I lay on the couch in my cabin thanking my stars I was getting the best of the bare tablecloth and empty house at home.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Some twenty years ago Sada's father, an American, grew tired of the slow life in a slow town, and lent ear to the fairies' stories told of the far East, where fortunes were made by looking wise for a few moments every morning and the rest of the day spent to the tune of samisens and flutes. He found the glorious country of Japan. The flutes and the samisens played to the swing of floating sampans and softly lighted lanterns were all too real for business.

They sung ambition to sleep and the fortune escaped.

He drifted, and at last sought a mean existence as teacher of English in a school of a remote seaside village. His spirit broke when the message came of the death of the girl in America who was waiting for him. Isolation from his kind and bitter hours left for thought made life alone too ghastly. He tried to make it more endurable by taking

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the pretty daughter of the head man of the village as his wife.

My temperature took a tumble when I saw proofs of a hard-and-fast marriage ceremony, signed and countersigned by a missionary brother who meant business.

A sordid tale? Mate, I know a certain spot in the Land of Blossoms where only foreigners are laid to rest, which bears testimony to a hundred of its kind—strange and pitiful destinies, begun with high and brilliant hopes in their native land. And when illusions have faded the end has borne the stamp of tragedy, for suicide has proved the so easily opened door from a life of failure and exile.

Sada's father was saved suicide or long unhappiness by a timely tidal wave, which swept the village nearly bare, and carried the man and his wife out to sea and to eternity.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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The child was found by Susan West, who came from a neighbouring town to care for the sick and hungry. Susan was a teacher missionary. Not much to look at, if her picture told the truth, but, from the bits of her history I've picked up, her life was a brighter jewel than most of us will ever find in a heavenly crown. Instead of holding the unbeliever by the nape of the neck and thrusting a not-understood doctrine down his unwilling throat, she lived the simple creed of loving her neighbour better than herself. And the old pair of goggles she wore made little halos around the least speck of good she found in every transgressor, no matter how warped with evil.

When she wasn't helping some helpless sinner to see the rainbow of promise at the end of the strait and narrow way, Susan spent her time and all her salary giving sick babies a fighting chance for life. She took the half-drowned little Sada home with her,

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## THE LADY MARRIED

---

and searched for any kinsmen left the child. There was only one, her mother's brother. He was very poor, and, as it was a girl, gladly gave his consent for Miss West to keep the child. Susan had taught the man English once in the long ago, and this was his chance to repay her.

Later on, when the teacher found her health failing and headed for home in America, Uncle Mura was still more generous and raised no objections to her taking the baby with her.

Together they lived in a small western town. The missionary reared the child by rule of love only, and went on short rations to educate her. Sada's eager mind absorbed everything offered her like a young sponge and when a few months ago Susanna folded her hands and joined her foremothers, there was let loose on the world this exquisite girl with a solitary legacy of untried ideals

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## THE LADY MARRIED

---

and a blind enthusiasm for her mother's people.

Right here, Mate, was when I had a bad attack of chills and fever. Just before Miss West passed along, knowing that the valley was near, she wrote to Uncle in Japan, and told him that his niece would soon be alone. Can't you imagine the picture she drew of her foster-child, who had satisfied every craving of her big mother heart—fascinating and charming, and so weighted with possibilities that Mura, who had prospered, leaped for his chance and sent Sada San money for the passage over.

Not a mite of anxiety shadowed her eyes when she told me that Uncle kept a wonderful tea-house in Kioto. He must be very rich, she thought, because he wrote her of the beautiful things she was to have. About this time the room seemed suffocating. I got up and turned on the electric fan. The only



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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thing required of her, she continued, was to use her voice to entertain Uncle's friends. But she hoped to do much more. Through Miss West she knew how many of her mother's dear people needed help. How glorious that she was young and strong and could give so much. Susan had also talked to her of the flowers, the lovely scenery, the poetry of the people and their splendid spirit, making a dreamland where every man was perfect. How she loved it! How proud she was to feel it was in part her country, how faithfully would she serve it. Oh, Susanna West! I'd like to shake you till your harp snapped a string! It's like sending a baby to pick flowers on the edge of a bottomless pit.

What could I say? The missionary teacher had told the truth. She simply failed to mention that in the fairy-land there are cherry-blossom lanes down which no human can wander without being torn by the briar

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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patches. The briar path usually starts from a wonderful tea-house where Uncles have grown rich.

Miss West didn't mean to shirk her duty. In most things the begoggled lady was a visionary with a theory that if you don't talk about a thing it does not exist, and, like many of her kind, she swept the disagreeables into a dust-heap and made for the high places where all was lovely. And yet she had toiled with the girl through all the difficulties of the Japanese language, and to give her a musical education had pinched to the point of buying one hat in eight years! Now it is all done, and Sada is launched on the high seas of life with a pleasure-house for a home and an unscrupulous Uncle with unlimited authority for a chaperon. Shades of Susan! But I am hoping guardian angels are "really truly," even if invisible.

Good-night, Mate. This game of playing

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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tag with jarring thoughts new and old has made six extra wrinkles.

But I am glad I came, and you and Jack will have to be ; for, to quote Charity, “ I’ve done resolutely on my word of honour ” to keep my hands, if possible, on Sada, whose eyes are as blue as her hair is black.





*Pacific Ocean.*

SINCE morning the sea has been a sheet of blue streaked with the silver of flying fish. That's all the scenery there is. Not a sail nor a bird nor an insect. Either the unchanging view, or something in the air, has stimulated everybody into being their nicest. It's surprising how quickly graciousness possesses some people when there is a witching girl around. Vivacious young men and benevolent officers have suddenly appeared out of nowhere spick and span in white duck and their winningest smiles. Entertainments dovetail till there is barely time for change of costume between acts.

But let me tell you, Mate, living up to

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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being a mother is no idle pastime, particularly if it means reviving the lost art of managing love-smitten youths and elderly male coquettes. There is a specimen of each opposite Sada and me at table. They are so generous with their company on deck before and after meals that I have almost run out of excuses, and am short of plans to avoid the heavy obligations of their eager attentions.

The youth is a To-Be-Ruler of many people—a Maharajah of India. But the name is bigger than the man. Two years ago his father started the boy around the world with a sack full of rubles and a head full of ancient Indian lore. With these assets, he paused at Oxford that he might skim through the classics. He had been told this was where all the going-to-be-great men stopped to acquire just the proper tone of superiority so necessary in ruling a country. This accomplished to his satisfaction, he ran over



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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to America to view the barbarians' god of money, and take a glance at their houses which touched the sky. But his whole purpose in living, he told me, was to yield himself to certain meditations so that in his final reincarnation, which was only a few centuries off, he would return to the real thing in Buddha. In the meantime he was to be a lion, a tiger, and a little white bird. At present he is plain human, with the world-old malady and a pain gnawing at his heart which threatens to send his cogitations whooping down a thornier and rosier lane than any Buddha ever knew. Besides, I am thinking a few worldly vanities have crept in and set him back an æon or so. He wears purple socks, pink ties, a red belt, and a dainty watch strapped around his childish wrist.

When I asked him what impressed him most in America, he promptly answered, with his eyes on Sada :

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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“Them girls. They are rapturous!”

Farewell Nirvana!

With a camp-stool in one hand and a rosary in the other he follows Sada San like the shadow on a sundial. Wherever she is seated, there is the stool and the royal youth, the beads in his hand forgotten, his mournful eyes feasting on the curves and dimples of her face, her lightest jest far sweeter than any prayer.

The other would-be swain calls himself a Seeker of Truth. Incidentally he is hunting a wife. His general attitude is a constant reminder of the uncertainty of life. His presence makes you glad it is so uncertain. He says his days are heavy with the problems of the Universe, but you can see for yourself that this very commercial traveller carries a light side-line in an assortment of flirtations that surely must be like dancing little sunbeams on a life of gloom.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Goodness knows how much of a nuisance he would be if it were not for a little lady named Dolly, grey in colour, dress, and experience, who sits beside him. At no uncertain age she has found a belated youthfulness and is starting on the first pleasure-trip of her life.

Coming across the country to San Francisco her train was in a wreck. In the smash-up a rude chair struck her just south of the belt line, and she fears brain fever from the blow. The alarm is not general, for though just freed by kind death from an unhappy life sentence of matrimony she is ready to try another jailer.

Whether he spied Dolly first and hoped that the gleam from her many jewels would light up the path in his search for Truth—and a few other things, or whether the Seeker was sought I do not know. However the flirtation which seems to have



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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no age-limit has flourished like a bamboo tree.

For once the man was too earnest. Dolly gave heed and promptly attached herself with the persistency of a barnacle to a weather-beaten junk. By devices worthy a finished fisher of men she holds him to his job of suitor, and if, in a moment of abstraction, his would-be ardour for Sada grows too perceptible the little lady reels in a yard or so of line to make sure her prize is still dangling on the hook.

To-day at tiffin the griefless widow unconsciously scored at the expense of the Seeker, to the delight of the whole table. For Sada's benefit the man quoted a long passage from some German philosopher. At least it sounded like that. It was far above the little grey head he was trying to ignore and so weighty I feared for her mentality. But I didn't know Dolly. She rose like a doughnut. Looking like a child who delights in

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the rhythm of meaningless sounds she heard him through, then exclaimed with breathless delight :

“ Oh, ain't he fluid ! ”

The man fled, but not before he had asked Sada for two dances that night.

It is like a funny little curtain raiser, with jealousy as a grey-haired cupid. As far as Sada is concerned it is admiration gone to waste. Even if she was not gaily indifferent, she is too absorbed in the happy days she thinks are awaiting her. Poor child. Little she knows of the limited possibilities of a Japanese girl's life, and what the effect of the painful restrictions will be on one of her rearing I dare not think. Once she is under the authority of her Uncle, the Prince, the Seeker and all mankind will be swept into oblivion, and until such time as she can be married profitably and to her master's liking she will know no man. The cruellest awaken-

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## THE LADY MARRIED

---

ing she will face is the attitude of the Orient towards the innocent offspring in whose veins runs the blood of two races separated by differences which never have been and never will be overcome.

In America the girl's way would not have been so hard, because her uncommon charm would have carried her far; but hear me, Mate, in Japan the very wave in her hair and the colour of her eyes will prove a barrier to the highest and best in the land. Even when there is something more telling than youth and beauty, unqualified recognition for the Eurasian is as rare as a square egg.

Another thought hits me in the face as if I had suddenly collided with a cross bumblebee. Will the teachings of the woman who lived with her head in the clouds hold hard and fast when Uncle puts on the screws?

The Seeker says it's the fellow who thinks first that wins. He speaks feelingly on the



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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subject. Right now I am going to begin cultivating first thought, and try to be near if Danger, whose name is Uncle, threatens the girl who has walked into my affections and made herself at home.



*Later.*

ALL the very good people are in bed. The very worldly minded and the young are on deck, reluctantly finishing the last dance under a canopy of make-believe cherry blossoms and wistaria. I am on the deck between, closing this letter to you, which I will mail in Yokohama in a few hours.

In a way, I shall be glad to see a quiet room in a hotel and hie me back to simple living, free from the responsibilities of a temporary parent. I am not promising myself any gay thrills in the meantime. What's the use? With Jack on the borderland of a sulphurous country and you in the Garden of Eden. His letters and yours will be my



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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greatest excitement. So write and keep on writing, and never fear that I won't do the same. You are the safety-valve for my emotions, Mate, so let that help you bear it.

Please mark with red ink one small detail of Sada's to-be story. When I was fastening her simple white gown for the dance her chatter was like that of a sunny-hearted child. Indeed, she liked to dance! Susan didn't think it harmful. She said if your heart was right your feet would follow. When Miss West could spare her she always went to parties with *Billy*, and oh, how he could dance, even if he was so big and had red hair! So! There was a Billy? I looked in her face for signs. The way was clear, but there was a soft little quiver in her voice that caused me carefully to label the unknown William and lay him on a shelf for future reference. Whatever the coming days hold for her, mine has been the privilege of giving the girl three weeks of unclouded happiness.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Outside I hear the little Prince pacing up and down, yielding up his soul to holy meditations. I'd be willing to wager my best piece of jade that his contemplations are something like a cycle from Nirvana and closer far to a pair of heavily fringed eyes. Poor little imitation Buddha! He is grasping at the moon's reflection on the water. Somewhere near I hear Dolly's soft coo, and deep-voiced replies.

But, unfinished packing, a bath and coffee are awaiting me. Dawn is coming, and already through the porthole I see a dot of earth curled against the horizon like a great grey silkworm. Above floats Fuji—the base wrapped in mists, the peak eternally white, like a giant snow-drop swinging in a dome of perfect blue. The vision is a call to prayer, a wooing of the soul to the undimmed heights of splendour.

After all, Mate, I may give you and Jack a glad surprise, and justify Sada handing me that letter addressed to—a Christian Sister.





*Yokohama, July 1911.*

Now that I am here, I am trying to decide what to do with myself. At home, each day was so full of happy things, and the happiest of all was listening for Jack's merry whistle as he opened the street door every night. At home there were always demands, big and little, popping in on me which I sometimes resented, and yet now that I am free from them it makes me feel as dismal as a long vacant house with the To Let board up.

In this lotus land there is no *must* of any kind for the alien, and the only whistles I hear come from the fierce little tugs that buzz around in the harbour, in and out

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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among the white sails of the fishing-fleet, like big black beetles in a field of lilies. But you mustn't think that life is dull for me! Fate and I have cried a truce, and she is showing me a few hands she is dealing other people. But first listen to the tale I have to tell of the bruise she gave my pride this morning. It will show black for many a day.

I joined a crowd on the water's edge in front of the hotel to watch a funeral procession passing in boats. Recently one hundred and eighty fishermen were sent to the bottom by a big typhoon, and the wives and the sweethearts were being rowed out to sea to pay a last tribute to them by strewing the fatal spot with flowers and paper prayers. White-robed priests stood in the front of the boats and chanted some mournful ritual, keeping time to the dull thumping of a drum. The air was heavy with incense. A dreamy melancholy was all around us, and I thought how hallowed and beautiful a thing

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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is memory. From out that silent watching crowd came a voice that sent my thoughts flying to those starry nights of long ago on my first trip across the Pacific. Soft south winds. Vows of eternal devotion that kept time with the distant throbbing of a ship's engine. I turned. I was facing Little Germany and five *littler* Germanys strung out behind. You surely remember him? How, when I couldn't see things his way, he swore to a wrecked heart and a never-to-be-forgotten constancy.

Mate, there was no more of a flicker of memory in the stare of his round blue eyes than there would have been in a newly baked pretzle. I stood still, waiting for some glimmer of recognition. Instead he turned to the pincushion on his arm, whom I took to be Ma Germany, and I heard him say, "Herzallerliebsten." I went straight to the hotel and had it translated. I *thought* it had a familiar sound. Wouldn't it be interesting



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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to know just how many "only ones" any man's life's history records? To think of my imagining him eating his heart out with hopeless longing in some far away Thibetan monastery. And here he was, pudgy and content, with his fat little brood waddling along behind him. If our vision could penetrate the future, verily Romance would have to close up shop. Oh no! I didn't want him to pine entirely away, but he needn't have been in such an everlasting hurry to get fat and prosperous over it. Wouldn't Jack howl?

I took good care to see that he wasn't stopping at this hotel. Then I went back to my own thoughts of the happy years that had been mine since Little Germany bade me a tearful good-bye. And, too, I wanted to think out some plan whereby I could keep in touch with Sada and friends with her relative.

Before I left the steamer, I had a surprise in the way of Uncles. Next time I will

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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pause before I prophesy. But if Uncle was a blow to my preconceived ideas, I'll venture Sada startled a few of his traditions as to nieces.

Quarantine inspection was short, and when at last we cast anchor the harbour was as blue as if a patch of the summer sky had fallen into it. The thatched roofs shone russet against the dark foliage of the hills. The temples raised their roofs in graceful curves from out of the pink mist of the crêpe myrtle.

Sada was standing by me on the upper deck fascinated by the picture. As she realised that the long-dreamed-of fairy land was unfolding before her, tears of joy filled her eyes—and tears of another kind filled mine.

Sampan, launches, and lighters clustered around the steamer as birds of prey gather to a feast. Captains in gilt braid. Coolies in blue and white with their calling cards stamped in large letters on their backs and

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the story of their trade written in fantastic Japanese characters around the tail of their coats. Gentlemen in divided skirts and ladies in kimono and clogs swarmed up the gangway. In the smiling, pushing crowd I looked for the low-browed relative I expected to see. Imagine the shock, Mate, when a man with manners as beautiful as his silk kimono presented his card and announced that he was Uncle Mura! I had been pointed out as Sada's friend. A week afterwards I could have thought of something brilliant to say. Taken unawares, I stammered out a hope that his honourable teeth were well and his health poor. You see I am all right in Japanese if I do the talking. For I know what I want to say and what they ought to say. But when they come at me with a flank movement, as it were, I am lost. Uncle passed over my blunder without a smile and went on to say many remarkable things, if sound means anything. However, trust even a deaf woman to prick up her ears when a



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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compliment is headed her way, whether it's in Sanskrit or Polynesian. In acknowledgment I stuck to my flag, and the man's command of quaint but correct English convinced me that I would have to specialise in something more than first thought if I was to cope with this tea-house proprietor, whose armour is the subtle manners of the courtier.

Blessed Sada! Only the cocksureness of youth made her blind to the check her enthusiasm was to receive in the first encounter with the new life. She had always met people on equal terms, most men falling easy victims. She was blissfully ignorant that Mura, by directing his conversation to me, meant to convey to her that well-bred girls in this enchanted land lowered their eyes and folded their hands when they talked in the presence of a MAN, if they dared to talk at all.

Not so this half child of the West. She fairly palpitated with joy and babbled away with the freedom of a sunny brook in the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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shadow of a grim forest. From the man's standpoint, he was not unkind. Unrestraint was to him an incomprehensible factor in a young girl's make-up, and, whatever was to follow, the first characters he meant her to learn must spell reverence and repression.

They hurried to shore to catch a train to Kioto. I must look harmless, for I was invited to call. I shall accept, for I have a feeling in spite of manners and silken robes that the day is not so dimly distant when the distress signals will be flying.

I waved good-bye to the girl as the little launch made its fussy way to land. She made a trumpet of her hands and called a merry *sayonara*. The master of her future folded his arms and looked out to sea.

The next day I had a lonely lunch at the Hotel. When I saw two lovery young things at the table where Jack and I had our wedding breakfast, so long ago, I made for

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the other end of the room and persistently turned my back. But I saw out of the corner of my eye that they were far away above food and, Mate, believe me, they didn't know it was even hot though a rain-barrel wouldn't have measured the humidity.

Of course, Jack and I were much more sensible, but that whole blessed time is wrapped in rosy mists with streaks of moonlight, so it's futile to try to recall just what did happen. I ought to have gone to another hotel, but the chain of memory was too strong for me.

I was hesitating between the luxury of a sentimental spell and a fit of loneliness, but a happy interruption came in a message from Countess Otani, naming the next day at two for luncheon with her at the Arsenal Gardens at Tokio. How I wished for you, Mate! It was a fairy story come true, dragons and all. The Arsenal Garden means just what it says. Only when the Dove of Peace is on

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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duty are its gates opened, and then to but a few, high in command. For across the white-blossomed hedge that encloses the grounds armies of men toil ceaselessly moulding black bullets for pale people, and they work so silently that the birds keep house in the long-fringed willows and the gold-fish splash in the sunned spots of the tiny lake.

After passing the dragons in the shape of sentries and soldiers, to each of whom I gave a brief life history, believe me, I wisely followed my nose and a guard down the devious paths.

The Countess received her guests in a banquet-hall, all ebony and gold, but was not seated permanently on a throne with a diamond crown screwed into her head, as we used so fondly to imagine.

The simplicity of her hospitality was charming. She and most of her ladies-in-waiting had been educated abroad. But



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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despite the lure of the Western freedom, they had returned to their country with their heads level and their traditions intact. But you guess wrong, honey, if you imagine custom and formality of official life have so overcome these high-born ladies as to make them lay figures who dare not raise their eyes except by rule. There were three American guests, and only by being as nimble as grasshoppers did we hold our own in the table talk, which was as exhilarating as a game of snowball on a frosty day.

We scampered all around war and settled a few important political questions. Poetry, books, and the new cabinet vied with the merriment over comparisons in styles of dress. One delightful woman told how gloves and shoes had choked her when she first wore them in America. Another gave her experience in getting fatally twisted in her court train when she was making her bow before the German Emperor.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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A gentle, soft-voiced matron made us laugh over her story of when, as a young girl at a mission school, she unintentionally joined in a Christian prayer, and how she nearly took the skin off her tongue afterwards scrubbing it with strong soap and water to wash away the stain. There wasn't even a smile as she quietly spoke of the many times later on, when, with that same prayer, she had tried to make less hard the after-horrors of war in the hospitals.

The possibilities of Japanese women are amazing even to those who think they know them. They look as if made for decoration only, and with a flirt of their sleeves they bring out a surprise that turns your ideas a double somersault. Here they were, laughing and chatting like a bunch of fresh school-girls for whom life was one long holiday. Yet ten out of the number had only recently packed away their gorgeous clothes and laid on a high shelf all royal rank and rights, for

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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a nurse's dress and kit. Apparently delicate and shy, they can be, if emergency demands, as grim as war or as tender as heaven.

It was a blithesome day, and it only Jack had been near so I could talk it out, dresses and all, content might have had a showing. As it was I put off playing a single at dinner as long as possible, by calling on a month-old bride whom I had known as a girl. With glee I accepted the offer of an automobile to take me for the visit, and repented later. Two small chauffeurs and a diminutive footman raced me through the narrow crowded streets, scattering the populace to any shelter it could find. The only reason we didn't take the fronts out of the shops is that Japanese stores are frontless. I looked back to see the countless victims to our speed. I saw only a crowd emerging from cover smiling with curiosity and interest. We hit the top of the hill with a flourish, and when I asked what was the hurry my



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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attendant looked hurt, and reproachfully asked if that wasn't the way Americans liked to ride.

Mate, this is a land of contrasts and contradictions. At the gardens all had been life and colour. At this home, where the wrinkled old servitor opened the heavily carved gate for me, it was as if I had stepped into a bit of ancient Japan, jealously guarded from any encroachment of new conditions or change of custom.

Like a curious package, contents unknown, I was passed from one automatic servant to another, till I finally reached the Mistress of Ceremonies. By clock-work she offered me a seat on the floor, a fan and congratulations. This last simply because I was Me. The house was ancient and beautiful. The room in which I sat had nothing in it but matting as fine as silk, a rare old vase with two flowers and a leaf in it, and an atmosphere of aloofness that lulled mind and body to



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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restful reverie. After my capacity for tea and sugared dough was tested, the little serving-maid fanning me all the while, bowing every time I blinked, the paper doors near by divided, and there, framed by the dim light, sat the young bride, as quaint and Oriental as if she had stepped out of some century-old Kakemono. In contrast to my recent hostesses it was like coming from a garden of brilliant flowers into the soft quiet shadows of a bamboo grove. No modern touch about this lady. She had been reduced by rule from a romping girl to a selfless creature, fit for a Japanese gentleman's wife and no questions asked. Her hair, her dress, and even her speech were strictly by the laws laid down in a book for the thirty-first day of the first month after marriage. But I would like to see any convention with a crust thick enough to obliterate entirely one woman's interest in another whose clothes and life belong to a foreign land. When I told her that I had come to Japan against

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Jack's wishes, and was going to follow him to China if I could, she paled at my rashness. How could a woman dare disobey? Would not my husband send me home, take my name off his house register and put somebody in my place?

Well now, wouldn't you like to see the scientist play any such tricks with me? That blessed old Jack who smiles at my follies, asks my advice, and does as he pleases, and for whom there has never been but the one woman in the world? I struggled to make plain to her the attitude of American men and women, and the semi-independence of the latter. As well explain theology to a child. To her mind the undeviating path of absolute obedience was the only possible way. Anything outside of a complete renunciation of self-interest and thought meant ruin, and was not even to be whispered about. I gave it up and came back to her sphere of poetry and mothers-in-law.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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When I said good-bye there was a gentle pity in her eyes, for she was certain her long-time friend was headed for the high road of destruction. But instead I turned into the dim solitude of Shiba Park. I had something to think about. To-day's experiences had painted anew in flaming colours the difference in husbands. How prone a woman who is dearly beloved is to fall into the habit of taking things for granted, forgetting how one drop of that full measure of happiness a good husband gives her would turn to rosy tints the grey lives of hundreds who are only wives in name. Her appreciation may be abundant, but it is so often voiceless. Her bugaboo of fear of sentimental display gradually makes her gratitude inarticulate. When it is too late she remembers with a heartbreak—the things she might have said and didn't. Why, I began to think right then of a thousand I wanted to say to Jack, and my only consolation was to store them away for some future happy hour.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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As I did so I walked further into the deep shadows of twilight. Instantly the spell of the East was over me. Real life was not. In the soft green silences of mystery and fancy, I found a seat by an ancient moss-covered tomb. Dreamily I watched a great red dragon-fly frivol with the fairy-blue wreaths of incense smoke that hovered above the leaf shadows trembling on the white sand. The deep melody of a temple bell sifted through a cloud of blossom, caught up my willing soul and floated out to sea and Jack, afar from this lovely land where stalks unrestrained the ugly skeleton of easy divorce for men. . . . The subject always irritates me like prickly heat.



*Nikko, July 1911.*

SUMMER in Japan is no joke, especially if you are waiting for letters. I know perfectly well I can't hear from you and Jack for an age, and yet I watch for the postman three times a day, as a hungry man waits for the dinner-bell.

The days in Yokohama were too much like a continuous Turkish bath, and I fled to Nikko—the ever moist and mossy. Two things you can always expect in this village of the “roaring wind-swept mountains”—rain and courtesy. One is as inevitable as the other, and both are served in quantities.

I am staying in a funny little semi-foreign hotel, which is tucked away in a pocket on

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the side of a mountain as comfy as a fat old lady in a big rocker who glories in dispensing hospitality with both hands. Just let me put my head out of my room door, and the hall blossoms with little maids eager to serve. A step towards the entrance brings to life a small army of attendants, bending as they come like animated jack-knives on a live wire. One carries my umbrella. One struggles with the mysteries of my overshoes, while the Master stands by and begs me to take care of honourable spirit. As it is the only spirit I possess, I heed his advice and bring it back to the hotel to find the entire force standing at attention, ready to receive me. I pass on to my room, with a procession of bearers and bearesses strung out behind me like the tail of a kite, anything from a tea-tray to the sugar-tongs being sufficient excuse for joining the parade.

When dressing for dinner, if I press the button, no less than six little picture girls

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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flutter to my door, each begging for the honour of fastening me up the back. How delighted Jack would be to assign them this particular honour for life. Such whispers over the wonders of a foreign-made dress as they struggle over the curious fastenings. They should hear my lord's fierce language. Each one takes a turn till some sort of connection is made between hook and eye. All is so earnestly done that I dare not laugh at their confusion or wriggle with impatience. I may sail into dinner with the upper hook in the lower eye and the middle all askew, but the service is so graciously given that I would rather have my dress upside down than grumble. Certainly I pay for it. I tip everything, from the proprietor to the water-pitcher. But the sum is so disproportionate to the pleasure and comfort returned that I smile to think of the triple price I have paid elsewhere, and the high-nosed condescension I have received in return for my money. Japanese courtesy may be on the surface, but

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the polish does not easily wear off, and it soothes the nerves just as the rain cools the air.

It goes without saying that I did not arrive in Nikko without a variety of experience along the way.

Two hours out from Yokohama, the train boy came to the coach and, with a smile as cheerful as if he were saying "Happy New Year," announced that there was a washout in front of us and a landslide at the back of us. Would everybody please rest their honourable bones in the village, while a bridge was being built and a river filled in. The passengers trailed into a settlement of straw roofs, bamboo poles, and acres of white and yellow lilies. I went to a quaint little Inn that was mostly out, built over a fussy brook. A pine tree grew from the side of the house. My room was furnished with four mats and a vase of flowers. When the policeman came to apologise for the rude-



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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ness of the storm in delaying me, the boy who brought my bags had to step outside so that the official would have room to bow properly. I ate my supper of fish-omelet and turnip pickle, served in red lacquer bowls, and drank tea out of cups as big as thimbles. Jack says Japanese teacups ought to be forbidden. In a moment of forgetfulness they could so easily slip down with the tea.

It had been many a year since I was so separated from my kind, and each hour of isolation makes clearer a thing I've never doubted but sometimes forget, that the happiest woman is she whose every moment is taken up in being necessary to somebody. To me unoccupied minutes are like so many drops of lead. And I had just read a telegram in the papers telling of the increasing dangers of the plague in Manchuria. Something of the old terror of loneliness began to creep over me. Happily the proprietor and his wife headed it off by asking me if I

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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would be their guest for the evening to see the Bon Matsuri, the beautiful festival of the dead. On the 13th day of the 7th month, all the departed spirits take a holiday from Nirvana, or any other seaport they happen to be in, and come on a visit to their former homes to see how it fares with the living. Poor homesick spirits. Not even heaven can compensate for the separation from beloved country and friends. As we passed along, the streets were alight with burning rushes placed at many doors to guide the spiritual excursionists. Inside the people were praying, shrines were decorated, and children in holiday dress romped merrily. Why, Mate, it was worth being a ghost just to come back and see how happy everybody was. For on this night of nights cares and sorrows are doubly locked in a secret closet and the key hidden carefully away. You couldn't find a coolie so heartless as to show a shadow of trouble to his ghostly relatives when they return for so brief a time to hold

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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happy communion with the living. He may be hungry, he may be sick, but there is a brave smile of welcome on his lips.

The crazy old temple at the foot of the mountain, glorified by a thousand lights and fluttering flags, reaped a harvest of rins and sens paid to the priests for paper prayers and bamboo flower-holders with which to decorate the graves. The cemetery was on the side of the hill, and every step of the way somebody stopped at a mound to fasten a lantern to a small fishing-pole and pin a prayer near by. This was to guide the spirit to his own particular spot.

A breeze as soft as a happy sigh came through the pines and gently rocked the lanterns. The dim figures of the worshippers moved swiftly about, delighted as children at the shadow pictures made by the twinkling lights, eagerly seeking out remote spots that no grave should be without its welcoming gleam.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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I, too, though an alien, was swayed with the good-will and kindness that sang through the very air, and fearlessly I would have decorated any festive ghost that happened by. I looked to see where I might lay the offering I had held in my hand. My hostess plucked my sleeve and pointed to a tiny tombstone under a camellia tree. I went closer and read the English inscription, "Dorothy, 1860-62." There was a tradition that once, in the long ago, a missionary and his wife lived in the village. Through an awful epidemic of cholera they stuck to their posts, nursed and cared for the people. Their only child was the price they paid for their constancy. To each generation the story had been told, and through all the years faithful watch had been kept over the little grave. Now it was all aglimmer with lanterns shaped like birds and butterflies. I added my small offering and turned hotelwards reluctantly.

My ancient host and hostess trotted along



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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near by, eager to share all their pathetic little gaieties with me. Their lives together had about as much real comradeship as those of a little brown hen and a big grey owl. They had been married sixty years. They had toiled and grown old together, but that didn't mean that wifey was to walk anywhere but three feet to the rear, or to speak except when her lord and ruler stopped talking to take a whiff at his pipe. I tried to walk behind with the old lady, but she threatened to stand in one spot for the rest of the night. Then I vainly coaxed her to walk with me at her husband's side, but her face was so full of genuine horror at such presumption that I desisted. Think, Mate, of trying to puzzle out the make-up of a people who for the sake of a long-ago kindness will for years include the returning spirit of a strange baby in one of their holiest and happiest festivals and prepare for it a loving welcome and yet whose laws will divorce a woman for disobedience to her husband's mother, and who

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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still hold to the ancient custom of "women to heel." And this is the land which Sada thinks a paradise, where the Seeker came for the truth, and where I—am longing for Jack.

*Nikko.*

MATE, there ought to be some kind of capital punishment for the woman who has nothing to do but kill time. It's an occupation that puts crimps into the soul and offers the supreme opportunity for the devil to work his rabbit foot. No, I can't settle down, or hustle up, to anything until I hear from Jack or you. Very soon, I'll be reduced to doing the one desperate thing lurking in this corner of the woods—flirting with the solitary male guest, who has a strong halt in his voice, and whose knees aren't on speaking terms.

Of course it's raining. If the sun gets

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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gay, and tries the bluff of being friendly, a heavy black giant of a cloud promptly rises up from behind a mountain and puts him out of business. Still, why moan over the dampness! It make the hills look like great green plush sofa cushions and the avenues like mossy caves.

I've read till my eyes are crossed, and I've written to every human I know, I've watched the giggling little maids patter up to a two-inch shrine and fling a word or two to Buddha and use the rest of their time for gossip. And the old lady who washes her vegetables and her clothes in the same baby lake just outside my window amuses me for at least ten minutes. Then, Mate, for real satisfaction I must turn to you, whose patience is elastic and enduring. It is one of my big joys that your interest and love are just the same as in those other days when you packed me off to Japan for the good of my country and myself. Then sent Jack after me. I



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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suppose I ought to have stayed at home as Jack told me—but I'm glad I didn't.

Though it has poured every minute I've been here, there have been bursts of sunshine inside, if not out. The other day my table boy brought me the *menu* and asked for an explanation of *assorted* fruits. I told him very carefully that it meant *mixed, different kinds*. He's a smart lad. He understands my Japanese. He grasped my meaning immediately and wrote it down in a little book. This morning he came to my room and announced, "Please, Lady, some assorted guests await you in the audience chamber. One Japanese and two American persons."

I've had my first letter from Sada, too, simply brimming with youth and enthusiasm. The girl is stark mad over the fairylandness of it all. She says her rooms are in Uncle's private house, which is in quite a different part of the garden from the tea-house. Thank the Lord for small mercies! Uncle

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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has given her some beautiful clothes and is so good to her. I dare say. He has taken her to see a lovely old castle and wonderful temples. The streets are all pictures and the scenery is glorious! That's true, but the girl can't live on scenery any more than a nightingale can thrive on the scent of roses. What's coming when the glamour of the scenery wears off and Uncle puts on the pressure of his will?

I haven't dared to give her any suggestion of warning. She is deadly sure of her duty, so enthralled with the thought of service to her mother's people. If I am to help her the shock of disillusionment must come from some other direction. The *Disillusioner* is so very seldom forgiven. I do not know what plans are being worked out behind Uncle's lowered eyelids. But I *do* know that his idea of duty does not include keeping such a valuable asset as a bright and beautiful niece hidden away for his solitary joy.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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He will consider himself a neglectful and altogether unkind relative if he does not marry Sada off to the very best advantage to himself. In the name of all the Orient what else is there to do with a girl—especially one whose blood is tainted with that of the West?

Well, Mate, my thoughts grew so thick on the subject I nearly suffocated. I went out for a walk, and ran into a cavalcade of donkeys, jinrikishas and chairs, headed by the Seeker and Dolly—who has also annexed the Maharajah.

They had been up to Chuzenji, and Chuzenji, I'd have you know, is lovely enough with its emerald lake and rainbow mists to start a man's tongue to love-making whether he will or no. And as surely as it's raining something has happened. Dolly was as gay as a day-old butterfly and smiled as if a curly-headed cupid had tickled her with a wing feather. The Seeker was deadly solemn,



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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possibly the aftermath of his impetuosity. Oh well! There is no telling what wonders can be worked by incurable youthfulness and treasures laid up in a Trust Company.

The little Prince, with every pocket and his handkerchief full of small images of Buddha he was collecting, asked at once for Sada. His heart was in his eyes, but there is no use tampering with a to-be-reincarnation by encouraging worldly thoughts. So I said I hadn't seen her since we landed! They were due on board the *Siberia* in Yokohama to-night on their way to China. I waved them good wishes and went on, amused and not a little troubled; worried over Sada, longing for Jack, lonesome for you. I passed one of the gorgeous blue, green, and yellow gates, at the entrance of a temple. On one side is carved a contorted figure, that looks like a cross between an elephant and a buzzard. It is called "Baku, the eater of evil dreams." My word! but I could furnish



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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him with a feast that would give him the fanciest case of indigestion he ever knew!

Mate, you would have to see Nikko with its majestic cryptomarias, sheltering the red and gold lacquer temples, you'd have to feel the mystery of the grey, green avenues, and have its holy silence fall upon a restless spirit like a benediction, to realise what healing for soul and body is in its very air, to understand why I joyfully loitered for two hours and came back sane and hungry—but wet as a fish.

Write me about the only man, the kiddies, and your own blessed happy self. And please don't forget that, without Jack, I am about as desolate as a derelict drifting at sea. I agree with Charity, "Ef you want to spile a valuable wife, turn her loose in a patch of idlesomeness."



*Still at Nikko, August 1911.*

You beloved girl, I've heard from Jack, and my heart is singing a ragtime tune of joy and thanksgiving. How he laughed at me for being too foolishly lonesome to stay in America without him. Oh, these men! Does he forget how he raged, once upon a time, when he was in America without me? As I am here, though, he wants me to have as good a time as possible. I'm to do anything I want to, and, blessed trusting man, buy anything I see that will fit into the little house at home.

Can you believe it? After a fierce battle the sun won out this morning, and even the blind would know by the dancing feel

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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of the air that it was a glorious day. At eight o'clock, when the little maids went up to the shrine, happy as kittens let out for a romp, they forgot even to look Buddha-ward, and took up their worship time in playing tag. The old woman, who uses the five-foot lake for the family washtub, brought out all her clothes, the grand-baby and the snub-nosed poodle that wears a red bib, to celebrate the sunshine by a carnival of washing.

I couldn't stand four walls a minute longer, so I'm down in the garden writing you, in a tea-house made with three fishing-poles and a bunch of straw. It is covered with pink morning glories as big as coffee-cups.

It has been three weeks since my last letter, and I know your interest in Jack and germs is almost as great as mine. But not quite like mine, Mate dear, for he's just all the world to me, and I miss him so. He has been in Pekin and he thinks the revolution



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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of the Chinese against the Manchu Government is going to be something far more serious this time than a flutter of fans and a sputter of shooting crackers. The long-suffering worm with the head of a dragon is going to turn, and when it does there won't be a Manchu left to tell the pig tale.

Jack is in Mukden now, where he is about to lose his mind with joy over the prospect of looking straight in the eye, if it has one, of this sporty old germ with a new label, and telling it what he thinks. The technical terms he gives are as paralysing as a Russian name spelled backwards. In a day's time this fearful thing wipes out entire families and villages. It has ravaged Northern Manchuria and the country about. Jack says that so deadly are the effects of this vivacious insect that, if a man walking along the street happens to breathe in one, he is a corpse on the spot before he is through swallowing. The remains are gathered up by men garbed in shrouds

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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and net masks, and the peaceful Oriental, who wasn't doing a thing but attending strictly to his own business, is soon reduced to ashes. All because of a pesky microbe with a surplus of energy.

You know perfectly well, Mate, that Jack does not speak in this frivolous manner of his beloved work. The interpretation is wholly mine, but I just dare not be serious over it. I must push any thought of his danger to the further ends of nowhere. Jack says the native doctors have put up a brave fight, but so far the laugh has all been on the side of the frisky germ.

It blasts everything it touches, and is most fastidious. Nobody can blame it for choosing as its nesting-place the little soft furred Siberian marmot which the Chinese hunt for its skin. If only the hunters could be given a dip in a sulphur vat before they lay them down to sleep in the unspeakable Inns, with their spoils wrapped around them, the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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chances for infection would not be so great. Of course the bare suggestion of a bath might prove more fatal than the plague, for, more often than not, the hunters are used only as method of travel by the merry microbe, and are immune from the effects. Of course Jack has all kinds of theories as to why this is so, but did you ever see a scientist who didn't have a workable theory for everything, from the wrong end of a carpet-tack to the evolution of a June bug?

From the hunters and their spoils the disease spreads, and their path southwards can be traced by desolated villages and piles of bones. Ugh!

Jack tells me he is garbed in a long white robe effect—I hope he won't grow wings—with a good-sized mosquito-net on a frame over head and face. He works in heavy gloves. The mouth and nose are the favourite points of attack, so everybody who ventures out wears over this part of the face a weird-

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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looking shield, which, by its firm look, says "No Admittance Here." But all the same that germ from Siberia is a wily thief, and steals lives by the thousands in spite of all precautions. Jack is as enthusiastic over the fight against the scourge as a College boy over football. His letter had so many big technical words in it I had to pay excess postage.

I've read it twice, but to save me I can't find any suggestion of the remotest possibility of my coming nearer. Yes, I know I said Japan only. But way down in the cellar of my heart I *hoped* he would want me nearer still.

What a happy day it has been. Here's your letter, just arrived. The priests up at the temple have asked me to come and see the ceremony of offering food to the spirits in the holy of holies. There isn't time for me to add another word to this letter. What a dear Mate you are to love while you lecture



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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me. What you say is all true. A woman's place *is* in her home. But just now out of the East I've had a call to play silent partner to science, and while it's a lonesome sport, at least it's far more entertaining than caring for a husbandless house. Anyhow, I am sending you a hug and a thousand kisses for the babies.



*Shoji Lake, August 1911.*

MATE, think of the loveliest landscape picture you ever saw ; put me in it and you'll know where I am. With some friends from Honolulu and a darling old man—observe I say *old*—from Colorado, we started two days ago to walk around the base of Fuji. Everything went splendidly till a typhoon hit us amidship and sent us careening, blind, battered, and soaked into this red and white refuge of a hotel that clings to the side of the mountain like a woodpecker to a telephone pole. I've seen storms, but the worst I ever saw was a playful summer breeze compared with the fury of this particular wind, that snapped great trees in two as if

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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they'd been young bean-poles, and whipped the usually peaceful lake into raging waves that swept up a gorge and licked up a whole village.

Our path was high up, but right over the water. Sometimes we were crawling on all fours. Mostly we were flying just where the wind listed, and if a tree got in our way as we flew so much the worse for us.

It's funny now, but the humour was not appealing at the time. Jack with his germs, and Sada with Uncle were not in nearly such immediate peril as I was—of being blown to glory via the fierce green waves below. My Colorado Irishman is not only a darling but he is a hero. Once I slipped and stopped rolling only when some faithful pines were too stubborn to let go.

I was many feet below the reach of any arms. In a twinkling my friend had stripped



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the kimono off the baggage coolie's back and made a lasso with which he pulled me up. Then, shocked to a standstill by the bareness of the coolie's birthday suit, he snatched off his coat and gave it to him with a dollar. We were a pretty procession of bedraggled and exhausted pleasure-seekers as we fell against the hotel door. Three men stood behind and opened it just wide enough to haul us in. But hot baths and boiling tea revived us, and soon we were as merry as any people can be who have just escaped annihilation.

The typhoon passed as suddenly as it came, and now the world, or at least this part of it, is as glowing and beautiful as if freshly tinted by the Master Hand.

A moment ago I looked up to see my rescuer gazing out of the window. "How do you feel, Mr. Carson?" I asked. His voice trembled when he answered, "Lady,

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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I feel glorified, satisfied, and nigh about petrified. Look at that!"

Below lay Shoji. Its sapphire waters rimmed with velvety-green, every rain-drop on the great pines a prism, the mountain a cascade of blossom. To the right Fuji, the graceful, ever-lovely Fuji, capricious as a coquette and bewitching in her mystery, with a thumb-nail moon over her peak, like a silver tiara on the head of a proud beauty. At her base the last fleecy clouds of the day gathered like white spirits worshipping at the feet of some holy saint.

The man's face shone. For forty years he had worked at harness-making, always with the vision before him that some day he might take this trip around the world. He has the soul of an artist which has been half-starved in the narrow environment of his small town life. Can't you imagine the mad revel of his spirit in this picture land?

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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He's going to Mukden. Of course I told him all about Jack's work. The old fellow—he must be all of seventy—was thrilled. I am going to give him a letter to Jack, also to some friends in Peking who I know will be good to him. If anybody deserves a merry-go-round sort of a time he does. Think of him sewing at saddles and bridles all these years, while his heart was withering for beauty!

I am glad of your eager interest in Sada. How like you never to be too absorbed in your own life to share other peoples' joys and sorrows.

If your wise head evolves a plan of action, send it by wireless, for if I read aright her message received to-day, the time is not far distant when the danger signals will be flashing out. Listen to this: "Uncle asked me to sing to some people who were giving a dinner at the tea-house last night. I put on my loveliest kimono and a hair-dresser



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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did my hair in old Japanese style and stuck a red rose at the side. For the first time I went into that beautiful, *beautiful* place my uncle calls 'The Flower Blooming Tea-House.' It was like a fairy palace. How the girls, who live there, laughed at my guitar. They had never seen one before. How they whispered over the colour of my eyes, said they matched my kimono and tittered over my clumsiness in sitting on the floor. But I forgot everything when the door slid open and I looked into the most wonderful dream garden that ever was, crowded with people. When I finished singing there was clapping and loud banzais. I looked up, and there were *only men* at this dinner, and I never saw so many bottles in my life. I felt very strange and so far away from dear Susan West. After I had sung once more I started back home. Uncle met me. I told him I was going to bed. For the first time he was cross and ordered me back to the garden where I was to stay until



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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he came for me. There never was anything as lovely as the green-pink garden and the lily-shaped lights and the flowers, or as pretty as the girls, who seemed to know just what to do. But I can't understand the men who come here. When dear old Billy —(thank heaven she says *dear* Billy)—talks I know just what he means. But these men use so many words Susan never taught me, and laugh so loud when they say them. There was one man named Hara whose clothes were simply gorgeous. The girls say he is very rich, and a great friend of Uncle's. He may have money, but he is not over-burdened with manners. He can outstare an owl."

There is more. But that's enough to show me Uncle's hand as plainly as if I were a palmist. If nothing happens to prevent, the man promises to do what thousands of his kind have done before. Regardless of obstacles and consequences he will marry the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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girl off to the highest bidder, rid himself of all responsibility and make a profit at the same time. From his point of view it is the only thing to be done. He would be the most astonished uncle in Mikadoland if anybody suggested to him that Sada had any right or feelings in the matter. He would tell you that, as Sada's only male relative, custom gave him the right to dispose of her as he saw fit. And custom is Law, and there is nothing back of that!

So far I've played only a thinking part in the matter, but I will not stand by and see the girl whose very loneliness is a plea, sacrificed without some kind of a struggle to help her. At the present writing I feel about as effective as a February lamb, and every move calls for tact. Wish I'd been born with a needle wit instead of a Roman nose. For if Uncle has a glimmer of a suspicion that I would befriend Sada at the cost of his plans, so surely as the river is lost in the sea, Sada

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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would disappear from my world—until it was too late for me to lend a hand.

Good-bye, Mate. At evening tide, as of old, look my way and send me strength from your vast store of calm courage and cool common-sense.





*September 1911.*

I AM in a monastery, Mate, but only temporarily, thank you. It's a blessing for the cause that Fate didn't turn me into a monk or a sister, or any of those inconvenient things with a restless religion, that wakes you up about three a.m. on a wintry dawn to pray to a piece of wood by the tune of a thumping drum. Some morning, when the frost was on the cypress, that gilded image would disappear, and for at least one day I'd have a nice fire, and my prayers wouldn't be decorated with icicles.

For two weeks my friends and I have been tramping through picture-book villages,

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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journeying across the silk-worm country, and over the mountain tops, sleeping on the floor, sitting on our feet and giving our bodies surprise parties with hot, cold, and lukewarm rice, sea-weed and devil-fish.

It has been one hilarious lark of outdoor life, with nothing to pin us to earth but the joy of being a part of so beautiful a world.

The road led us through glorious forests, over the Bridge of Paradise to Koyo San, whose peak is so far above the mist-wreathed valleys that it scrapes the clouds as they float by. But I want to say right here that Kobo Daishi, who founded this monastery in the distant ages and built a temple to his own virtues, may have been a saint, but he wasn't much of a gentleman to be so reckless of the legs and necks of the coming generations, as to blaze the trail to his shrine over mountains so steep that as we climbed up our pack mule could have easily bitten off his own tail, if he'd so minded.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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This afternoon I must hustle down. I suppose the only way to get down is to roll. Well, anyway, I'm in a hurry! My mail beat me up the trail and a letter from Sada San begs me to come to Kioto to see her as soon as I can. She only says she needs help and does not know what to do. And blessed be the telegraph that winds up from Hiroshima. The school is in urgent need of an assistant at the kindergarten, and they ask me to come. The principal, Miss Look, has gone to America on business, for three months. Hooray! Now is my chance to resign from the "Folded Hand Society," and do something that's really worth while, as long as I can't go to my man.

How good once again to be in that dear old Mission School, where, in the long ago, I toiled and laughed and suffered while I waited for Jack.

The prospect of returning to the girls and

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the kiddies makes me want to do a Highland Fling, even if I am in a monastery with a sad-faced young priest serving me tea and mournful sighs between prayers.

What a funny old world it is after all. It recklessly smites you, then binds up the hurts by giving you a desire or so of your heart. Just now the desire of my heart is to catch that train for Kioto. So here goes a prayer, for a body intact, as I tread the path that drops straight down the mountain, through the crimson glory of the maples and the blazing yellow of the gingko tree, to the tiny little station that looks like an ornamented hen-coop in the far-away distance.



*Kioto, September 1911.*

DEAREST MATE, I can't spend a drop of ink in telling you how I got here, how the baggage beast ran away and decorated the mountain shrubbery with my belongings, and how, after all my hurry in dropping down from Koyo San, the brakesman forgot to hook our car on to the train and started off on a picnic, while the engine went merrily on and left us out in the rice-fields. Suffice to say I landed in Kioto in a whirl that spun me down to Uncle's house and back to the hotel. And by the way my thoughts are going, I may be booked, for all I know, to spin on through eternity.

My visit to Sada was so full of things that

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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didn't happen, I am almost tempted to tie a shooting-cracker to Uncle to make something come about.

When I reached the house, I sent in my card to Sada. Uncle came gliding in like a soft-footed panther. He did it so quietly that I jumped when I saw him. We took up valuable time exchanging polite greetings, as set down on page 10 of the Book of Etiquette,—see the chapter “On calls made by inconvenient foreigners.”

When our countless bows were finished I asked in my coaxingest voice if I might see Sada. Presently she came in, dressed in Japanese clothes and beautiful even in her pallor. She was changed, sad, and a little drooping. The conflict of her ideals of duty to her mother's people and the real facts in the case, had marked her face with a something far deeper than girlish innocence. It was inevitable. But above the evidence of struggle there was a something which told

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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me plainly that the dead and gone Susan West had left more than a mere memory. Silently I blessed all her kind.

Sada was unfeignedly glad to see me, and I longed to take her in my arms and kiss her. But such a display would have marked me in Uncle's eyes as a dangerous woman with unsuppressed emotions, and unfit for companionship with Sada. At least I had hoped that his Book of Etiquette said, "After this bow and depart." But my hopes hadn't a pin feather to rest upon. He stayed right where he was. All right, old Uncle, thought I, if stay you will, then I shall use all a woman's power to beguile you and a woman's wit to out-trick you, if only I can make you show your hand. It's going to be a game with the girl as the prize. It is also going to be like playing leap-frog with a porcupine. He has cunning and authority to back him. I have only my love for Sada. And Jack is on a wild germ chase.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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For a time I talked at random, directing my whole conversation to him as the law demands. By accident or luck or any old reason, I learned that the weak point in his armour of polite reserve was colour-prints.

Just talk colour-prints to a collector, and you can pick his pocket with perfect ease, or pluck the hair of his head strand by strand and he'll never suspect it.

My knowledge of colour-prints could be written on my thumb-nail. But I made a long and dangerous shot, by looking wise and asking if he thought Matahei compared favourably with Moronobo as painters of the same era? I choked off a gasp when I said it, for I'd have you understand that for all I knew Matahei might have lived in the time of Jacob and Rebecca and Moronobo a thousand years afterwards. But I guessed right the very first time, and Mura San with a flash of appreciation at my interest said my learning was great. It was an



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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untruth, and he knew that I knew it, but it was courteous, and I looked easy. Then he talked long and delightfully as only lovers of such things can. At least it would have been delightful had I not had the longing to see Sada alone so much on my mind. It was not to be,—at least not then. But mark one for me, Mate. Uncle was so pleased with my keen and hungry interest in colour-prints and my desire to see his collection, that he invited me to a feast and a dance at the house the next night.

The following evening I could have hugged the person, male or otherwise, who called my dear host away for a few minutes just before the feast began.

Sada told me hurriedly that Uncle had insisted on her singing every night at the tea-house. She had first rebelled, and then flatly refused, for she didn't like the girls. She hated what she saw and was afraid of the men. Uncle was furiously angry, said he

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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would teach her what obedience meant in this country. He would marry her off right away, and be rid of a girl who thought her foreign religion gave her a right to disobey her relatives. She was afraid he would do it, for he had not asked her to go to the tea-house again. Neither had he permitted her to go out of the house. Once she was sick with fear, for she knew Uncle had been in long consultation with the rich man Hara, and he was in such good humour afterwards. But Hara, she learned, had gone away.

She would *not* sing at those dinners again, not if Uncle choked her. What must she do? I saw Uncle returning, but I quickly whispered, "What about Billy?"

Ah, I knew I was right. The rose in her hair was no pinker than her cheeks. If Billy could only have seen her then, I'd wager my shoes—and shoes are precious in this country—that her duty to her mother's people would go hunting for another job.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Before Uncle reached us I whispered, "Keep Billy in your heart, Sada. Write him. Tell him," and in the same breath I heartily thanked Uncle for inviting me.

It *was* a feast, Mate ; the most picturesque, uneatable feast I ever sat on my doubly honourable feet to consume. There were opal-eyed fish with shaded pink scales, served whole, and soft red-brown eels split up the back and laid on a bed of green moss. Then there were soups, thin and thick, lotus root and mountain lily and raw fish. Each course—and their name was legion—was served on a little two-inch-high lacquer table, with everything to match. Sometimes it was gold lacquer, then again green, once red and another time black, but it was all a dream of colour that shaded in with the little maids who served. Swift and noiseless and pretty, they were trained to graceful perfection. The few furnishings of the room were priceless. Uncle sat in his silken robes, gracious,

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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courteous, surprising me with his keen knowledge of current events. In the guise of host, he is charming; that is, if only he would not always talk with his eyelids half shut. He gives the impression that he is only dreamily conscious of the world and its follies, while I know perfectly well that he sees straight through everything around him and clean on to the city limits.

Again and again he referred to his colour-prints and the years of patience required to collect them. Right then, Mate, I made a vow to study the pesky things as they have never been attacked before.

I can't say I ever had much use for pictures of which you couldn't tell the topside from the bottom without a label.

Now I decided all at once to make a collection. Heaven knows what I'll do with it. But Uncle grew so enthusiastic that he included his niece in the conversation, and while his humour was at high tide I coaxed



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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him into a promise that Sada might come down to Hiroshima, very soon, and help me look for prints.

Yes, indeed, there was a dance afterwards, and everything was deadly, hysterically solemn, so rigidly proper, so stiffly conventional, that it palled. It was the most maleless house of revelry I ever saw—why, Mate, even the kakemono were pictures of perfect ladies and the gate man was a withered old woman.

There was absolutely nothing wrong I could name. It was all exquisitely, daintily, lawfully Japanese. But I sat by my window till early morning.

There was a very ghost of a summer moon. Out of the night came the velvet tones of a mighty bell, the sing-song prayers of many priests, the rippling laugh of a little child and the tinkling of a samisen. Every sound made for simple joy and peace. But I thought of the girl somewhere beyond the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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twinkling street lights, who had dreamed dreams of this as a perfect land, but who, with alien races in her blood and a strange religion in her heart, was now paying the price of disillusionment, with bitter tears.

Eight o'clock the next morning I cabled Jack, "Hiroshima for winter."

He answered, "Thank the Lord you're nailed down at last."

P.S.—I've just bought all the books on colour-prints I could find.

October 1911.

HIROSHIMA. Get up and salute, Mate. Isn't that name like the face of an old familiar friend? I have to shake myself to realise that it is not the long ago but *now*. A recent picture of Jack, and one of you and the babies, is about the only touch of the present. Everything is just as it was in the old days when the difficulties of teaching in a foreign kindergarten in a *foreigner* language were the least of the battles that faced me. Well, I thought I'd finished with battles—you'll admit I've had my fair share of them—but there's a feeling of fight in the air.

Same little room, in the same old Mission school. Same blue wallpaper, turned green

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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with the years, and, Lord love us, from the music-room still comes the sound like all the harmonies of a baby organ factory gone on strike. But bless you, honey—there's an eternity of difference in *having* to stand a thing and doing it of your own free will, and as Black Charity would remark, "I don't pay 'em no mind," and let them wheeze out their mournful complaints to the same old hymns.

Had you been here the night my dinky little train pulled into the station you would have guessed that it was a big Fourth of July celebration or the Emperor's birthday. I would not dare guess how many girls there were to meet me. There seemed half-a-mile or so of them lined up on the platform, and each carried a round red lantern. Until they had made the proper bow with deadly precision there wasn't a smile or a sound. That ceremony over, they charged down upon me in an avalanche of gaiety. They waved their lanterns, they called Banzai, they laughed



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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and sang some of the old-time foolish songs we used to sing. They promptly put to rout all legends of their excessive modesty and shyness. They were just young and girlish, happy, eager, and sweet in their generous welcome. It warmed every fibre of my being. When they thinned out a little, I saw coming at the other end of the platform a figure flying towards me, the sleeves of her kimono outstretched like the wings of a grey bird, and a great red rose in her hair for a top-knot. It was Miss First River, a little late, but more than happy, as she sobbed out her welcome on the front of my clean shirt waist.

It was she, you remember, who in all those other years was my faithful secretary and general comforter, the one who slept across my door when I was ill and who never forgot the hot-water bag on a cold night. For years she has supported a drunken father and a crazy mother, and has sent one

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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brother to America and made a preacher of another.

Now she is to be married, she told me, in a little note slipped into my hand as we walked up the street of the Upper Flowing River to the school, adding, "Please guess my heart."

And—miracle of the East! she has known the man a long time and they are in love. I am so glad I am going to be here for the wedding. It comes off in a few weeks.

I started work in the kindergarten this morning. It has been said that when the Lord ran out of mothers he made kindergarteners. Surely he never did a better job—for the kindergarteners. Mate, when I stepped into that room, it was like going into an enchanted garden of morning glories and dahlias. What a greeting the regiment of young Japlings gave me. I just *drank* in all the fragrance of joy in the eager comradeship

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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and sweet friendliness of the small Mikados and Mikadoesses, with a keen delight that made the hours spin like minutes.

And would you believe it? The first sound that greeted my ears after their whole duty had been accomplished in the very formal bow, was, "Oh—. It is the skitten Sensei (Skipping teacher). A skit, a skit? We want to skit." Of course they weren't the same children by many years. But things die slowly in Hiroshima, even good reputations. Everything was pushed aside and, work or no work, teachers and children celebrated by one mad revel of skipping.

There are many things to do and getting into the old harness of steady routine work, and living on the tap of a bell is not as easy as it sounds, after years of live-as-you-please. But it's good for the constitution and is satisfying to the soul.

I once asked my friend Carson from

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Colorado if he could choose but one gift in all the world, what would it be? "The *contintment* of steady work," answered the wise old philosopher from out of the West, and my heart echoes his wisdom.

I've had a big fat letter from Jack and the reputation he gives those germs he's associating with is simply disgraceful. He gives me statistics also. I wish he wouldn't. It takes so much time and I always have to count on my fingers.

He tells me too of an English woman who has joined the insect expedition. Says she is the most brilliant woman he ever met. Thanks awfully. And he has to sit up nights studying to keep up with her. I dare say.

I'll wager she's high of colour and mighty of muscle and with equal vehemence says a thing is "Strawdn'ry" whether it's a dewdrop or a spouting volcano.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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I can't help feeling a bit envious of her—out there with my Jack. All right, I won't get agitated till I have to.

A note from Sada. She says Uncle has had another outburst. Pity it hasn't gone to his head. One comfort is that he still consents to her coming down here. Her beautiful ideals have been smashed to smithereens, and the fact that nothing has ever been invented that will stick them together again adds no comfort to the situation. Her disappointment is heart-breaking. No, I can't make a move till I get her to myself and have a life and death talk with her. I am playing for time.

I wrote her a cheerfully foolish letter. I told her I was making all kinds of plans for her visit. I also looked up some doubtful dates—at least my text-book on colour-prints said they were doubtful—and referred them to Uncle for confirmation, begging, too, that he would give instructions to Sada

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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about a certain dealer in Hiroshima who has some pictures so violent that positively I wouldn't hang them in the cowshed if I cared for Suky. But it is anything for conversation now.

I almost forgot to tell you that we have the same chef as when I was a kindergarten teacher here in the school years ago. He's as prosperous as a pawnbroker. He gave me a radiant greeting. "How are you, Tanaka?" quoth I. "All same like damn monkey, Sensei," he replied. But he is unfailingly cheerful, and the cleverest rascal in existence with the artistic temperament highly developed. . . . He sometimes sends in the most unchewable roast smothered in cherry blossoms.

How wise you were, Mate, to choose home and husband instead of a career. I love you for it.

*Hiroshima, October 1911.*

FOR springing surprises, all full of kindness and delicate courtesies, Japanese girls would be difficult to match.

Before a whisper of it reached me, they made arrangements the other day for a reunion of all my graduates of the Kindergarten Normal Class. It's hard to imagine when they found the time for the elaborate decorations they put up in the big kindergarten room and the hundred-and-one little things they had done to show their love and warmth of welcome. It was a part of their play to blindfold me and lead me in. When I opened my eyes, there they stood. Twenty-five happy faces smiling into mine. And twenty

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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babies to match. It was the kiddies that saved the day. I was not a little bewildered and the tears stung my eyes. But with one accord the babies set up a howl at anything so inconceivable as a queer foreign thing with a tan head, appearing in their midst. When peace was restored by natural methods, the fun began.

The girls fairly bombarded me with questions. Could I come to see every one of them? Where was Jack San? Could they see his picture? Did he say I could come? How "glad" it was to be together again. Did I remember how we used to play? Then everybody giggled. One thought had touched them all. Why not play now?

The baby question was quickly settled. Soon there was a roaring fire in my study. We raided the class-room for rugs and cushions and, with the collection, made down beds in a half ring round the crackling



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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flames. On each we put a baby, feet fireward. We called in the Obasan (old woman) to play nurse, and on the table near by we placed a row of bottles, marked "First aid to the hungry." As I closed the door of the emergency nursery I looked back to see a field of pink heels waving hilariously. Surely the fire goddess never had lovelier devotees than the Oriental cherubs that lay cooing and kicking before it that day.

How we played! In all the flowery kingdom so many foolish people could not have been found in one place. What chaff and banter; what laying aside of cares and responsibilities, of heavy hearts if there were any. For a time, at least, the years fell away from us and we revived all the games and dances we ever knew. True, time had stiffened joints, and some of the movements were about as graceful as a pair of fire-tongs. I may be dismissed for some of the fancy steps I showed the girls, but they were very

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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happy and certainly more supple than when we began.

When we were breathless we hauled in our old friend the big *hibachi*, with a peck of glowing charcoal right in the middle. We sat on our folded feet and made a big circle all around, with only the shine of the coals for a light. Then we talked. Each girl had a story to tell, either of herself or someone we had known together. Over many we laughed. For others the tears were close by. Warmed by companionship, and moved by unwonted freedom, they little knew how much they unconsciously revealed of their lives, their longings and ambitions. But whatever the story the dominant note was acceptance of "what was" without protest. It may be fatalism, Mate, but it's indisputable that looking finality in the face had brought to all of them a quietness of spirit that no longing for wider fields or personal ambition could disturb.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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None of them had known their husbands before marriage. Few had even seen them. Many were compelled to live with the difficulties of an exacting mother-in-law, who had forgotten that she was ever a young wife.

But above all there was a peacefulness, a willingness of service to the husband and all his demands, a joy in children and home, that was convincing as to the depth and dignity of character which can totally efface self for the happiness of others.

One girl, Miss Deserted Lobster Field, was missing; I asked about her and this is her story.

She was quite pretty when she left school, and there was no difficulty in marrying her off. Two months afterwards the young husband left to serve his time in the army. For some reason the mother-in-law did not "enter into the spirits of the girl," and

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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without consulting those most concerned she divorced her son and sent the girl home. When the soldier husband returned a new wife, whom he had never seen, was waiting for him at the cottage door. The sent-home wife was terribly in the way in her father's house, for by the law she belonged neither there nor in any other place. It is difficult to remarry these offcasts. Something, however, had to be done. So dear father took a stroll out into the village, and being sonless adopted a young boy as the head of his house. This boy is called a Yoshi. Father married the adopted son to the soldier's wife that was, securely and permanently. A Yoshi has no voice in any family matter and is powerless to get a divorce.

Moral: If in Japan you want to make sure of keeping a husband when you get him, get father to adopt a boy—then marry him.

But the wedding of weddings is the one



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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which took place last summer, by suggestion. The groom unseen lived in America for two years. The maid made her home in the school. The groom-to-be wrote to a friend in Hiroshima, "Find me a wife." The friend wrote back, "Here she is." Miss Chestnut Tree, the maid, all aflutter, had her name put on the house register of the far-away groom, did up her hair as a married woman should—and went back to work.

To-morrow she sails for America, and we are all going down to wave her good-bye, and good luck. She is married all right. There will be no further ceremony.

I would not dare to tell you all the stories they told me. For I would never stop writing, and you'd never stop laughing or crying. The beautiful afternoon ended too soon. But, for the rest of time, this day will be crowned with halos made with the mightiness of the love and dearness of the girls

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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who were once my students, always my friends.

It took some time to assort the babies and make sure of tying the right one on the right mother's back. Not by one shaved head could I see the slightest difference in any of them, but mothers have the knack of guessing.

Out of the big gate they went, and down the street, all aglimmer with the evening lights, twinkling in the purple shadows, their *gèta* click-clacking against the hard street, to the music of their voices as they called back to me, "Oyasumi, Oyasumi. Go kigen yoro shiku" (Honourably rest. Be happy always to yourself).

My gratitude to this little country is great, Mate. It has given me so much. It was here life taught me her sternest lessons. And here I found the heartsease of Jack's love. But for nothing am I more thankful, than for

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the love and friendship of the young girl-mothers, who were my pupils, but from whom I have learned more of the sweetness and patience of life, than I could ever teach.





*November 1911.*

MATE, there's a man in Hiroshima for whom I long and watch as I do for no other inhabitant. It is the postman. You should see him grin as he trots around the corner to find me waiting at the gate, just as I used to do in the old teaching days. I doubly blessed him this morning. Thank you for your letter. It fairly sings content. Homeyness is in every pen-stroke.

Please say to your small son David that I will give his love to the "king's little boy" *if* I see him. My last glimpse of him was in Nikko. Poor little chap. He was permitted to walk for a moment. In that moment he

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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spied a bantam hen, the anxious mother of half-a-dozen puff-ball chickens. Royalty knew no denial and went in pursuit, the bantam knowing no royalty pursued also. The four men and six women attendants were in a panic. The baby was rescued from a storm of feathers and taken back to the palace with an extra guard of three policemen.

I've been very busy, at play and at work. We've had a wedding too. My former secretary, Miss First River, has, as she expressed it, "married with" Mr. East Village.

The wedding took place at the ugly little Mission Church, which we transformed into a beautiful garden with weeping willows, chrysanthemums, and mountain ferns. Also we had a wedding bell. In a wild moment of enthusiasm I proposed it. It's always a guess where your enthusiasm will land you out here. I coaxed a cross old tinner to make the frame for me. He expostulated the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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while that the thing was impossible, because it had never been done before in this part of the country. It was rather a weird shape, but I left the girls to trim it and went to the Church to help decorate. The bell was to follow upon completion. It failed to follow, and after waiting an hour or so I sent for it. The girls came carrying one trimmed bell and one half covered. I asked, "Why are you making two wedding bells?" They answered, "Why, Sensei! Must not the groom have one for *his* head too?"

Everybody wanted to do something for the little maid, for she had so bravely struggled with adversity of fortune and perversity of family.

So there were four flower girls, and the music teacher played *at* the wedding march. In spite of her efforts Lohengrin seemed hoarse and complaining as it haltingly came from the organ. Nobody minded.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Miss First River was a lovely enough picture, in her bridal robes of crêpe, to cause the guests to draw in long breaths of admiration till the sound was like the coming of a young cyclone. They were not accustomed to such prominence given a bride, or to the wedding served in Western style.

Oh, yes. The groom was there, a very secondary consideration, for the first time in the history of Hiroshima, but so much in love that he didn't seem to mind the obscurity.

The ceremony over, the newly wed seated themselves on a bench facing the guests. An elder of the Church arose, and with solemnity befitting a burial, read a sermon on domestic happiness and some forty or fifty congratulatory telegrams. After an hour or so of this, cakes were passed around and it was over. At the maids' request I gave her an "American watch with a good engine in it," with much love in it too, and went back to work. Don't you for a minute imagine that because I am



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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not a regularly ordained missionary sister that I am not working. The fact is, Mate, the missionaries are still afflicted with the work habit, and so subtle is its cheerful influence, that it weaves a spell over all who come near. You roll up your sleeves and pitch right in when you see them at it, and you put all your heart in it too, and thank the Lord for the opportunity to help.

The fun begins at 5.30 in the morning to the merry clang of a brazen bell, and it keeps right on till 6 p.m. For fear of getting rusty before sunrise some of the teachers have classes at night. I'd rather *rust*. I am too tired then to see to think.

I've put away all my vanity clothes in sack-cloth. No need for them in Hiroshima, and in an icy room on a winter's morning I do not stop to think whether my dress has an in curve or an out sweep. I fall into the first thing I find and finish buttoning it when the family fire in the dining-room is reached.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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That solitary warming spot to a big house is one of the luxuries of missionary life.

In between times I've been cheering up the homesickest young Swede that ever got loose from his native heath. So firmly did he believe that Japan was a land where necessity for work doth not corrupt nor the thief of pleasure break through and steal, that he gave up a good position at home and signed a three years' contract with a Hiroshima firm. Now he is so sorry that all the pink has gone out of his cheeks. Until he grows used to the thought that living where the Sun flag floats is not a continuous holiday, the teachers here at the school have kindly decided to take turns in making life livable for him. And yet they say a missionary leads a life of ease. His entertainment means tramps of miles into the country, sails on the lovely Ujina Bay and climbs over the mountains. In the afternoon the boy is so in evidence we almost fall over him if we step sideways, and yesterday, in des-

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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peration, I tied an apron on him and let him help me make a cake. Even at that, with a dab of chocolate on his cheek and flour on his nose, his summer sky eyes were weepy whenever he spoke of his "Mutter." I've done everything for him except lend him my shoulder to weep on. And it may come to that.

However, there's hope for him, and already I see signs of recovery. One of our teachers is young and pretty.

Jack, in a much-delayed epistle, tells me thrilling and awful things about the plague. He says he walks through what was once a prosperous village and now there isn't a live dog to wag a friendly tail. Every house and hovel is tenantless, often with unfinished meals on the table and beds just as the occupants left them. A great pit, near by, full of ashes and bones, tells the story of the plague come to town, leaving

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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silent, empty houses and the dust-laden winds as the only mourners.

The native doctors gave a splendid banquet the other night. Jack says that with the visiting doctors in full array of evening dress and decorations it looked like a big international flag draped around the table.

Everybody made a speech, and Jack hasn't yet stopped shooting off fireworks in honour of the English woman. Wonder if England isn't lonesome without that bunch of learning. Seems almost a pity to waste such scintillating knowledge in poor old isolated Mukden.

Well, maybe I ought to have studied science. It's too late now. I have Uncle on my hands, and I've got to commit to memory pages of the colour-print text-book that run something like this, "fine as a single hair or swelling imperceptibly till it



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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becomes a broken play of light and shade, or a mass of solid black, it still flows, unworried and without hesitation, on to its appointed course." I must stick to it if only to see how it looks when it does reach its appointed course in this most pleasant manner.

Sada San is coming down next week. I am looking forward to her visit with great delight, and hunting for a plan whereby I can help her. Suppose Uncle should give me a glad surprise and come too!



*Hiroshima.*

MY DEAR BEST GIRL,

If ever a sailor needed a compass, I need the level head that tops your loving heart. I am worried, hollow-eyed, and feel as useless as a brass turtle.

It has been days since I heard from Jack. When he last wrote, he was going to some remote district out from Mukden. I don't dare think what might happen to him. He says he must travel to the very source of the trouble. If Jack really wanted trouble he could find it nearer home. Isn't it like him, though, with his German education, to hunt a thing to its lair? I suppose the next thing I shall hear from him will be that he has

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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disappeared into some marmot hole at the foot of a tree in a Siberian forest.

Sada is here, a pale shadow of her former radiant self. She is in deadly fear, for Uncle has written to tell her what he expects her to do when she returns.

For the first few days of her visit, she was like an escaped prisoner. She played and sang with the girls. The joy of her laughter was contagious. Everybody fell a victim to her gaiety. We have picnicked up the river in a sampan. We waded and fished, then landed on an island of bamboos and ferns and cooked our dinner over a hibachi. We've had concerts, tableaux and charades here at the school, with a big table for the stage and a paper moon and a green mosquito net for the scenery.

In every pastime or pleasure Sada San has been the moving spirit, adorably girlish and winning in her innocent joy. I grow faint to think of the rude awakening.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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She has talked much of Susan West and their life together, of their work and simple pleasures. To the older woman she poured out unmeasured affection, fresh and sweet. Susan made a flower-garden of the girl's heart. If even a tiny weed sprouted there it was coaxed into a blossom. But she gave no warning of the savage storms that might come and lay the garden waste.

Well, I'm holding a prayer-meeting a minute that the rosy ideals of the visionary teacher will hold fast when the wind begins to blow.

I found Sada one day on her bed, a crumpled heap of woe, white, and shaking with tearless sobs. Anxious to shield her from the persistent friendliness of the girls, I persuaded her to come with me to the old Prince's garden, just behind the school.

She had heard from Uncle. For the first time he definitely stated his plans. Hara,

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the rich man, had sent him a proposal of marriage for Sada.

Of course, said Uncle, such an offer from so prosperous and prominent a man must be accepted without hesitation. It was wonderful luck for any girl, said dear Uncle, especially for one of her birth.

Nothing further would be done until she returned, and he wished that to be at once.

Not a suggestion of feeling or sentiment. Not a word as to Sada's wishes or rights. If these were mentioned, he would undoubtedly reply that the rights in the matter were all his. As to feelings, a young girl had no business with such things. His voice would be courteous I've no doubt, but his manner of saying these things would fairly puncture the air.

His letter was simply a cold business statement of the sale of the girl. When I looked at the misery in her young eyes I

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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could joyfully have stamped upon him and throttled him. I longed for a dentist's grinding machine and the chance to bore a nice big hole into each one of his even white teeth.

Sada knows nothing of the man Hara except that he is coarse and drinks heavily. The girls in the tea-house always seemed afraid when he came. Vague whispers of his awful private life had come to her.

What was she to do? She had no money, no place to go to, and Uncle was the only relative she had in the world.

Mate, I heard a missionary speak a profound truth, when he said that the Japanese would never be worth while till all their relatives were dead. Their power is a chain forged round freedom.

She had such loving thoughts about Uncle, Sada sobbed—before she came. She longed to make his home happy and be one of his people. She loved the beautiful country of her Mother and craved its friendship.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Miss West had drilled it into her conscience that marriage was holy and impossible without love. Bless you, Susan. She wanted to do her duty, but she *could not* marry this man whom she had only seen but once, and had never spoken to.

She knew the absolute power the law of the land gave Uncle over her. She knew how useless it was for Japanese girls to struggle against the rigid rules laid down by their elders. She knew resistance would bring punishment. Well, Mate, I don't want ever to see again such a look as was in Sada's eyes as she turned her set face to me and forced through her stiff lips a stormy "I won't!" But I thanked God for all the Susan Wests and their teachings.

In spite of the girl's unhappiness there was a glow in the region of my heart. Of her own free-will Sada San had decided. Now there was something definite to work upon. In the back of my brain a plan was beginning



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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to get busy. Hope glimmered like a Jack-o'-lantern.

It was late evening. A flaming sunset flushed the sky and bathed the ancient garden of arched bridges and twisted trees in a pinkish haze. The very shadows spelled romance and poetry. I had wisdom given me to use the charm of the hour for the beginning of my plan.

I drew Sada down beside me, as we sat in a queer little playhouse by the garden lake.

In olden time it had been the rest place of the Prince Asano, when he was especially moved to write poetry to the moon as it floated up, a silver ball, in a navy-blue sky over "Bird Feather Mountain." Had his ghost been strolling along then, it would have found deeper things than "the sadness of the night which beholds the fading blossoms of the heart" to fill his thoughts.

I led the girl to tell me much of her life

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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in Nebraska, of her friends and their amusements. Hers had been the usual story of any fresh wholesome girl. The social life in a small town had limited her experiences, but had kept her deliciously naïve and sweet.

For the first time in our talks, she avoided Billy's name. I hailed it as a beautiful sign. I mentioned William myself, and delighted in her red-cheeked confusion. I gently asked her to tell me of him.

She and Billy had gone to school together, played together. He always seemed like a big brother to her, and his head was very red. Once a boy had called her a half-breed, and Billy had promptly knocked him down and sat on his head while he manipulated a shingle.

Another time, when they were quite small, the desire of her heart was to ride on the tricycle of a rich little boy who lived across the street. But the pampered youth jeered

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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at her pleadings, and exultingly rode up and down before her. Billy saw and bided his time till the small Crœsus was alone. He nabbed him, chucked him into a chicken-coop and stood guard for an hour while Sada rode gloriously.

Through college they were comrades and rivals. Billy had to work his way, for he was the poor son of an invalid mother.

From college he had gone straight to a firm of rich manufacturers, and was now one of the big buyers.

He had pleaded with her not to come to Japan. He loved her. He wanted her. When she had persisted he was furious, and they had quarrelled. But she thought she was right. Then, she didn't know how dear Billy was, how big and splendid he was. She had written to him but seldom. She had told him nothing of her disappointment. Maybe he had married. She couldn't write now. It would be too much like begging,

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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when she was at bay, for the love which she had refused when all was well. No, she *couldn't* tell him.

We talked long and earnestly in that old garden, and the wind that sifted through the pine needles and the waxy leaves was as gentle as if the spirit of Susan West had come to watch and to bless.

I gained a half promise from her that she would write to Billy at once and explicitly. But I could not stop at that.

Unsuspected by Sada I learned his full address and, Mate, I wrote a letter to the red-headed lover in Nebraska, in which I painted a picture that is going to cause something sudden to happen, else I am mistaken in my estimate of the spirit of the West in general, and William Weston Hilton in particular.

I told him if he loved the girl to come as fast as steam would bring him, that I would



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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help him at the risk of anything—though I haven't an idea how. I've just returned from a solitary promenade to the post-office through the dark and lonely streets, so that my letter will catch to-morrow's American mail.

Sada told me that for some reason she had never mentioned Billy's name to Uncle. Now isn't that a full poker hand nestling up my half sleeve?

Uncle thinks the way clear as an empty race track, and all he has to do is to saunter down the home stretch and gather in the prize-money.

You see the lingo of the old Kentucky Derby days hangs round me still.

Any scruple on the girl's part will be as relentlessly and carelessly brushed aside as a bothersome insect.

If she persists there's always force. He fears nothing from me. I am a foreigner,

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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and, from his standpoint, too crudely frank to be clever.

He doubtless argues, if he gives it any thought, that, if I could, I would not dare to interfere. And then I am so absorbed in colour-prints. So I am, and, I pray Heaven, in some way to his undoing. The child has no other friends. Shrinkingly she told me of her one attempt to make friends with some high-class people, and the uncompromising rebuff she had received upon their discovering that she was an Eurasian.

The pure aristocrats seldom lower the social bars to those of mixed blood. I wonder, Mate, if the ghost of failure, who was her father, could see the inheritance of suffering he has left his child, what his message would be to those who would recklessly dare a like marriage?

Sada goes to Kioto in the morning. She has promised not to show resistance but to

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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keep quiet and alert, and to write me at every opportunity.

I am sure Uncle's delight in securing such a rich prize as Hara will burst forth in a big wedding feast and many rich clothes for the trousseau. I hope so. Preparation will take time. I would rather gain time now than treasure.

I put Sada to bed, tucked her in and cuddled her to sleep as if she had been my own daughter.

There she lies now, her face startlingly white against the mass of black hair. The only sign of her troubled day is a frequent half-sob and the sadness of her mouth, which is constantly reading the riot act to her laughing eyes in the waking hours.

Poor girl! she is only one of many whose hopes wither like rose leaves in a hot sun, when met by authority in the form of tyrannical relatives.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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The arched sky over the mountain of "Two Leaves" is all ashimmer with the coming day. Thatched roof and bamboo grove are daintily etched against the amber dawn. Lights begin to twinkle and thrifty tradesmen cheerfully call their wares.

It is a land of peace, a country and people of wondrous charm. But incomprehensible is the spirit of some of the laws that rule its daughters.



*Hiroshima.*

MATE DEAR,

One of my girls, when attacked with the blues, invariably says in her written apology for a poor lesson, "Please excuse my frivolous with your imagination, for my heart is warmly." So say I.

I am sending you the kimono and crêpes you asked for. Please write for something else. I want an excuse to spend another afternoon in the two-by-four-foot shop, with a play garden attached, that should be under a glass case in a jewellery store. The proprietor gives me a tea-party and tells me a few of his troubles every time I visit his store. Formerly he kept two shops exclusively for hair ornaments and ribbons. He did a

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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thriving trade with school-girls. Recently an order went out from the mighty maker of school laws to the effect that lassies, high and low, must not indulge in such frivolous extravagances as head adornments. The ribbon market went to smash. The old man couldn't give his stock away. He stored his goods and went in for selling crêpes.

Make another request quickly. I'd rather shop than think.

Also, if you need any information as to how to run a cooking school, I can enclose it with the next package.

Since the war scores of Japanese women are wild to learn foreign cooking. When we enquired the reason for such enthusiasm, we found it was because their husbands, while away from home, had acquired the taste for Occidental dainties. Now their wives want to know all about them, so that they can set up opposition shows at home to the many tea-houses which offer European food as an

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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extra attraction. And, depend upon it, Mate, if the women start to learn they stick to it till there is nothing more to know on the subject.

I was to furnish the knowledge, and the ladies the necessary equipment, but, alas! I failed in my catalogue of the utensils we should need.

The first thing we tried was biscuit. All went famously until the time came for baking. I asked for a pan! A pan! What kind of a pan? Would a wash-pan do? No, if it was all the same, I'd rather have a flat pan with a rim. Certainly! Here it was, with a rim and a handle. Out came a shiny dust-pan. After all, there wasn't very much difference in the taste of the biscuit.

Our prize accomplishment so far has been pies! Our skill has not only brought us fame, but the city is in the throes of a pie epidemic. A few days ago, when the old prince of the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Ken came to visit his Hiroshima home, the cooking ladies, after a day's consultation, decided that in no better way could royalty be welcomed than by sending him a lemon pie. They sent two creamy, heavily meringued affairs. They were the hit of the season. The old gentleman wrote a poem about them, saying he ate one and was keeping the other to take back to his country home when he returned—a month hence. Then he sent us all presents.

We've had only one catastrophe. In a moment of reckless adventure my pupils tried a pound cake without a recipe. A pound cake can be nothing else but what it says. That means a pound of everything—and Japanese soda is doubly strong. That was a week ago, and we haven't been able to stay in the room since.

Good-bye. The tailless pink cat and the purple fish with the pale blue eyes are for the kiddies.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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I am enclosing an original recipe sent in by Miss Turtle Swamp of Clear Water Village.

1 cup of *desecrated* cocoanut.

5 cups flowers.

1 small spoon and Barmilla (Vanilla).

3 eggs, skinned and whipped.

1 cup sugar.

Stir and pat in pan to cook.



*December 1911.*

MATE,

I'd be ashamed to tell you how long it is between Jack's letters. He says the activity of the revolutionists in China is seriously interfering with traffic of every kind. All right—let it go at that. Now he has gone way up north of Harbin. In the name of anything, *why* can't he be satisfied? England is with him. I don't know who else is in the party. Jealous? No, the idea! just plain furious. I am no more afraid of Jack falling in love with another woman than I am of Saturn making Venus a birthday present of one of his rings. The trouble is she may fall in love with him, and it's altogether

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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unnecessary for any other woman to get her feelings disturbed over Jack.

I fail to see the force of his argument that it is not safe or wise for any woman to travel in that country, while he shows such enthusiasm over the presence of the Britisher. No, Jack has lost his head over intellect. It may take a good sharp blow for him to realise that intellect, pure and simple, is an icy substitute for love. It just can't be—can it, Mate?—that he is like those men who are so deadly sure of the one that they take a holiday with the other. Of course you are laughing at me. So would Jack ; and both would say it is unworthy. That's just it. It's the measly little unworthies that nag one to desperation. Besides, Mate, I shrink from any more trouble, any more heartaches, as I would from flames. Oh, surely I have had my full share. The sadness of the bygone years creeps over me and covers the present like a pall.

There is only one thing left to do—work.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Work and dig, till there isn't an ounce of strength left for worry. I stay in the kindergarten every available minute. The unstinted friendship of the kiddies is the heartsease for so many of life's hurts.

Then there are the long walks, when healing and uplift of spirit come to me from the beauty of the country. I tramp away all alone. The little Swede often begs to go. At first I rather enjoyed him. But he's growing far too affectionate. I am not equal to caring for a pair of young things; a heart-broken girl and a homesick fat boy are too much for me. He's improving so rapidly I think it will be better for him to talk love stories and poetry to some one more appreciative. I am not in a very poetical mood. He might just as well talk to the pretty young teacher as about her all the time.

I have scores of friends up and down the country roads I travel. The boatmen on

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the silvery river always wave their head rags in salute, the women hoeing in the fields with babies on their backs, stop long enough to wish me good-day and good luck. The laughing red-cheeked coolie girls pause in their work of driving piles for the new bridge to have a little talk about the wonders of a foreigner's head. With bated breath they watch while I give them proof that my long hatpins do not go straight through my skull. The sunny greetings of the multitudes of children lift the shadows from the darkest day, and there is always the glorious scenery, the shadowed mystery of the mountains, a turquoise sky, the blossoms and the bamboo. The brooding spirit of serenity soon envelops me with tender peace.

On my way home, in the river close to shore, is a crazy little tea-house. It's furnished with three mats and a paper lantern. The pretty hostess, fresh and sweet from her out-of-door life, brings me rice, tea, and a

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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fresh eel. She serves it with such gracious hospitality that it makes my heart warm. While I eat, she tells me stories of the river life. I am learning about the social life of families of fish and their numerous relatives that sport in the "Thing of Substance river," the habits of the red-headed wild ducks which nest near, of the god and goddesses who rule the river life, the pranks they play, the revenge they take. And, too, I am learning a lesson in patience through the lives of the humble fishermen. In the season seven cents a day is the total of their earnings. At other times, two cents is the limit. On this they manage to live and laugh and raise a family.

It's all so simple and childlike. So free from pretension, hurry, and rush. Sometimes I wonder if it is not we with our myriad interests who have strayed from the real things of life.

On my road homeward, too, there is a crudely carved Buddha. He is so altogether

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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hideous that they have put him in a cage of wooden slats. On certain days it is quite possible to try your fortune. You buy a paper prayer from the priest at the temple, chew it up, and throw it through the cage at the image. If it sticks you'll be lucky.

My aim wasn't straight or luck was against me to-day. My paper prayers are all on the floor at the feet of the grinning Buddha.

Oh, Mate, Mate, I'm lonely and so troubled.

Jack is in Manchuria and Sada is with Uncle. I haven't heard a word from her since she left. I am growing truly anxious.



*Hiroshima, December 1911.*

MATE,

I do not know whether I can write you sanely or not. But write you I must. It is my one outlet from a fearful anxiety. I've just been down to cable Billy Hilton in Nebraska, to come by the first steamer. I haven't any idea what he'll do when he gets here or how I can help him. But he is my one hope.

Yesterday I had a desperate letter from Sada San, written hurriedly and sent secretly, telling me of the horrid fate she is facing.

She finds that the man Hara, whom her Uncle has determined she shall marry, has a wife and three children!

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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On the flimsiest pretext, he has sent the woman home to clear his establishment for the new wife. And, Mate, can you believe it, he has kept the children, the youngest a nursing baby just three months old!

A geisha girl in the tea-house slipped in one night and told Sada. She went at once to Uncle and asked him if it was true. He said that it was, and that Sada ought to consider herself, a half-breed, very lucky to be wanted by such a man. When she told him that she would die before she would marry the man, he laughed at her. Since then she has not been permitted to leave her room.

The lucky day for marriage has been found and set. Thank goodness it's seventeen days from now, and if Billy races across by Vancouver, he can make it. In the meantime Nebraska seems a million miles away. I know the heartbeats of the fellow who is riding to the place of execution with

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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a reprieve, but seventeen days is a deadly slow nag.

It is useless for me to appeal to anybody out here. Those in Japan who would help me are powerless. Those who *could* help would smile serenely and tell me it was the law. And law and custom supersede any lesser questions of right or wrong.

By law the smallest act of every inhabitant is regulated, from the quantity of air he breathes to the proper official place for him to die. But, Mate, imagine the *majesty* of any law which makes it a ghastly immorality to mildly cheek your mother-in-law, and a right, lawful, and moral act for a man with any trumped-up excuse to throw his legal wife out of the house, that room may be made for another woman who has appealed to his fancy.

Japan *may* not need missionaries, as people who think they know are fond of telling you, but by all the Mikados that ever were or will

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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be, her divorce laws need a few revisions more than the nation needs battleships. You might run a country without gunboats, but never without women.

This case of Hara is neither extreme nor unusual. I've been face to face before, in this kingdom of flowers, with tragedies of this kind when the women were the victims of a man's caprice, and he was upheld by a law that would shame any country the sun shines on.

By a stroke of a pen through her name, on the records at the court-house, the woman is divorced, sometimes before she knows it. Then she goes away to hide her disgrace and her broken heart. Not broken, it may be, because of her love for the man who has cast her off, but because from the day when she is invited to go home on a visit and her clothes are sent after her, she is a marked woman right on to the end of her life.

If she has children, the chances are the



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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husband retains possession of them, and she is seldom, if ever, permitted to see them.

I know your words of caution would be, Mate, not to be rash in my condemnations, to remember the defects of my own land. I am neither rash nor forgetful. I do not expect to reform the country. I am not arguing. I am simply telling you facts.

I know, too, some Fountain Head of Knowledge will rise from the back seat and beg to state that the new civil code contains many revisions and regulates divorces. The only trouble with the new civil code is that it keeps on containing the revisions, and only in theory do they get beyond the books in which they are written.

Next to my own, I love this sunlit, flower-covered land, which, despite all, has given the world men and women supremely unselfish, brave and noble. But there are a few deformities in the country's law system that a skilful surgeon should amputate right up to

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the last joint. The divorce laws, made in ancient times by the gone-to-dust, but still sacred and revered, ancestors, need him badly. Who'd give a hang for any old ancestors so cut on the bias?

I can't write any more. I am too agitated to be entertaining. I must acquire another page of colour-print technique, too. I wrote Sada a revised version of Blue Beard, that would turn that venerable gentleman grey, could he read it. Uncle will be sure to. I dare him to solve the puzzle of my fancy writing. But I made Sada San understand that Prince Red Head was coming to her rescue, if the engine didn't break down.

But there's nothing to do but wait, and pray there are no balky places in Billy's backbone.

P.S.—Cable just received. William is on the wing.

*Kioto Hotel, Kioto,*  
*January 1912.*

BELOVED MATE,

Rejoice with me! Sing songs and give thanks! Something has happened. I don't know just what it is, but little thrills of happiness are playing hop-scotch up my back, and my head is even lighter than usual.

Be calm and I'll tell you about it.

A telegram from Yokohama brought me to Kioto. Billy had beaten me by a few hours. When I reached here at noon to-day, a big broad-shouldered youth met me, whom I made no mistake in greeting as Mr. Hilton. Billy's eyes are beautifully brown. William's chin looks as if it was modelled for the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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purpose of dealing with obstreperous tea-house Uncles.

Not far from the station is a black and tan temple—ancient and restful. To that we strolled and sat on the edge of the Fountain of Purification, which faces the monastery garden, while we talked things over. Billy did the questioning. I did the talking to the mystic chanting of the priests.

I related all that I knew or what had happened and was about to happen to Sada. There was no reason for me to adorn the story with any fringes for it to be effective. Billy's face was grim. He said little, put a few more questions, then left me, saying he would join me at dinner in the hotel.

I passed an impatient, tedious afternoon ; went shopping, bought things I can never use, wondering all the time what was going to be the outcome of it all. I would have written Jack, only there is no way for a letter to reach him except by flying machine,



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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or absent treatment. Anyhow I suppose I mustn't interrupt his intellectual festivities.

Mr. Hilton returned promptly this evening. We ordered dinner, then forgot to eat it. He did not refer to the afternoon, and long intimacy with Science has taught me when not to ask questions. There was only a fragment of a plan in my mind. I'd no further communication from Sada, and knew nothing more than that the wedding was only a day off.

We decided to go to Uncle's house together. I was to get into the house and see Sada if possible, taking, as an excuse for calling, a print on which, in an absent-minded moment, I had squandered thirty yen.

Billy was to stay outside, and if I could find the faintest reason for so doing, I was to call him in. That was his suggestion.

I found Uncle scintillating with good humour and hospitality. Evidently his plans

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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were going smoothly, but not once did he refer to them. I asked for Sada. Uncle smiled sweetly and said she wasn't in. Ananias died for less. I was externally indifferent, and internally dismayed.

I showed him my print. At once he was the eager, interested artist. He went into a long history of the picture. Though I looked at him and knew he was talking, his words conveyed no meaning. I was faint with despair. It was my last chance. I could have wagered Uncle's best picture that Billy was tearing up gravel outside. I had been in the house one hour, and had accomplished nothing. Surely if I stayed long enough something had to happen.

Suddenly out of my hopelessness came a blessed thought.

Uncle had once promised to show me a priceless original of Hokusai. I asked if I might see it. He was so elated that, without calling a servant to do it for him, he disap-

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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peared into a deep cupboard to find his treasure.

For a moment helpless, desperate, I was swayed with a mad impulse to lock Uncle up in the cupboard. But there was no lock. It was so deadly still that it hurt. Then, outside, I heard a low whistle, with an unmistakable American twist to it, followed by a soft scraping sound. My heart missed two beats. I did not know what was happening. I was not even sure that Sada was within the house, but something told me that my cue was to keep Uncle busy. I obeyed with a heavy accent.

When he appeared with his print, I began to talk. I recklessly repeated pages of textbooks, whether they fitted or not. I fired technical terms at him till he was dizzy with mental gymnastics.

He smoothed out his precious picture. I fell upon it. I raved over the straight front mountains and marcelled waves in that

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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foolish old wood-cut as I have never gushed over any piece of paper before, and, I hope, never shall again. Not once did he relinquish his hold of that faded deformity in art. Neither did I.

I surprised myself with the new joys I constantly found in the pigeon-toed ladies and slant-eyed warriors. Uncle needed absorption, concentration and occupation. Mine was the privilege to give him what he required.

No further sound from the garden, and the silence drilled holes into my nerves.

I was so fearful the man would see my trembling excitement that I soon made my adieux. Uncle seemed a little surprised, and graciously mentioned that tea was being prepared for me.

I never wanted tea less and solitude more. I said I must take the night train for Hiro-



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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shima. It was a sudden decision. But to stay would be useless.

I said Sayonara and smiled my sweetest. I had a feeling I would never see dear Uncle Mura on earth again, and doubtless our environment will differ in the beyond.

I went to the gate. It faced two streets. Both were empty. Not a sign of Billy or the jinrikishas in which we had come.

I trod on air as I tramped back to the hotel.



*Hiroshima, January 1912.*

MATE DEAR,

I am safely back in my old quarters: why shouldn't I be? A detective has been my constant companion since I left Kioto, sitting by my berth all night on the train, and following me to the gates of the school.

When I took my walk into the country the next afternoon, I saw him out of the back of my head, and a merry chase I led him. Up the steepest paths I knew, down the rocky sides, across the ferry, and into the remote village, where I let him rest his body in the stinging cold while I made an unexpected call. For once he earned his salary and his supper.

That night I was in the sitting-room alone.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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A glass door leads into an open porch. Conscious of a presence, I looked up to find two eyes fixed on me. It made me creepy and cold, yet I was amused. I sat long and late, but a shadow near the door told me I was not alone. Even when in bed I could hear soft steps under my window.

I have just come from an interview that was deliciously illuminating.

Sada San has disappeared, and, so goes their acute reasoning, as I was the last person in her Uncle's house before her absence was discovered, the conclusion is that I have kidnapped her.

Two hours ago the scared housemaid came to announce that "two Mr. Soldiers, with swords, wanted to speak to me."

I went at once, to find my guardian angel and the Chief of Police for this district in the waiting-room. We wasted precious minutes making inquiries about one another's health



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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and relatives, accentuating every other word with a bow and loud indrawn breath. We were tuning up for the business in hand.

The chief began by assuring me that I was a teacher of great learning. I hadn't heard it, but bowed. It was poison to his spirit to question so honourable, august, and altogether wise a person, but I was suspected of a grave offence, and I must answer his questions.

"Where was my home?"

Easy.

"How did I live?"

Easier.

"Who was my grandfather?"

Fortunately I remembered.

"Was I married?"

Muchly.

"Where was my master?"

Didn't have any. My husband was in Manchuria, possibly Mongolia, maybe Tibet.

"Was I in Japan by his permission?"

I was not.

"Had I been sent home for disobedience? Please explain."

No explanation. I was just here.

"Did I know the penalty for kidnapping?"

No, colour-prints interested me more.

"Had any of my people ever been in the penitentiary?"

No, only the legislature.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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At this both men looked puzzled. Then the Chief made a discovery. "Ah-h," he sighed, "Legislature—American word for crazysylum." Would Madam positively state that she knew nothing of the girl's whereabouts? Madam positively and truthfully so stated. I did not know; I only knew what I thought, but, Mate, you can't arrest a woman for just plain thinking. After a grilling of an hour or so they left me, looking worried and perplexed. They had never heard of Billy, and I saw no use adding to their troubles. Nobody seems to have noticed him at dinner with me, and now that I think of it, he had strange men pulling the jinrikishas to the hotel.

It was dear of Billy not to implicate me. I am ignorant of what really happened, but wherever they are I am sure Sada is in the keeping of an honourable man.

The days have been exciting. To-night I am tired and a little heavy-hearted. It

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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is three weeks since I heard from Jack. Even Japan seems desolate without him. I am glad Miss Look, the kindergarten Principal, returns next week. I will have my freedom. But, like a little dog running after a train, what will I do with it when I get it?

I see frequent references in the Kobe papers to the brilliant and heroic work of the English woman around Mukden and Harbin. Her name is always next to Jack's.

I wish I were with you and the dear kiddies.

Last night after I closed this letter I had a cable. It said :

“ Married in heaven.

Billy and Sada.”

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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But the wires must have been crossed, for it's dated Shanghai.

Or perhaps the operator was so excited over repeating such a message that he forgot to put in the period.



*February 1912.*

DEAREST MATE,

At last I have a letter from Jack. Strange to say I am about as full of enthusiasm over the news he gives me as a thorn tree is of pond lilies.

He says he has something like a ton of notes and things on the various antics of the bubonic germ in Manchuria when it is feeling fit and spry. But he is seized with a conviction that he must go somewhere in North-West China, where he thinks there is a happy hunting ground of evidence which will verify his reports to the Government. Suppose the next thing I'll hear he will be chasing around the outer rim of the world hunting for somebody to verify the Government.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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There is absolutely no use in my trying to say the name of the place he has started for. Even when written it looks too wicked to pronounce. It's near the Pass that leads into the Gobi Desert.

Jack wrote me to go to Shanghai, and he would join me later. I looked on the map, and find that Pekin is about a thousand miles closer than Shanghai to the place with the dislocating name.

I concluded that it would be nice to give Jack a glad surprise, by wiring him that I was leaving for Pekin, and save him a long, lonesome journey by himself.

He seems averse to travelling alone. I learn that the woman doctor is with him, going across country and partly across desert to take the trans-Siberian Railroad to Europe. Isn't that delicious when you realise that the trans-Siberian road can easily be reached at Harbin, only a short distance

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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from Mukden? It's like going to Coney Island from New York by way of San Francisco. Possibly she wants new experience.

May her appetite be appeased by the endless variety attending the riding of a camel which sports two humps. The varied cross-currents these ships of the desert encounter in the course of an ordinary trot makes one long for happy death in a nice sandy spot. The caravans carry everything across the sands, from pin-head cigarettes to steel bridges. I only hope they will be equal to conveying so much brilliancy.

Her other wants are obvious. No, Mate, I am not unjust. I know her type perfectly well. She is one of those women who in the long day of her youth listened to the siren call of a career. Flinging all else to the high winds she pursued that career to its last hole as madly as a dog trees a cat, only to find by itself it is about as satisfactory as ocean foam is to a thirsty traveller.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Now she has squeezed all possible joy out of the career business she finds fascination in another woman's possession. Jack? Why, Mate, you know perfectly well he would call it all in the line of science. Poor old Science! Think of holding it responsible for everything from the warped emotions of a lady doctor to the nervous system of an athletic germ.



*Mukden, Manchuria,*  
*February 1912.*

WHEN I got to this city of red tombs, yellow mud and cold drizzle there was a message from Jack awaiting me. It says:

“I implore you come no further. Country dangerous.”

So it is. But bandits and haters of foreigners are small evils. I am at the station hotel waiting to take the through night train. On every side I hear nothing but praise for the wonderful things accomplished by the English woman, with Jack a close second.

It seems to me that if the praisers would use a little of their energy in cleansing the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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unspeakable streets and in purifying the air, which is saturated with evil odours, the necessity would not be so great for wearing gauze shields over the mouth and shrouds over the clothes, to keep out the microbes.

The air is heavy with rumours and angry threats of Revolutionary uprisings. The country is swarming with soldiers as thick as briars in a bramble patch. Even the moaning winds seem laden with evil prophecies and the scowl I see on every face finds response in my heavy heart.

Good-night, beloved comrade.

*Pekin, China,*  
*February 1912.*

WELL, I am here—landed right in the middle of the Revolution. Depend upon it, if I do not actually start it, I am usually on tap when one begins. It is a tremendous sight, and when I look at the incomprehensible saffron-hued masses that crowd the streets I no longer wonder at the colour of the Yellow sea.

But oh, Mate, if I could only make you see the gilded, four-walled city in which the history of the ages is being laid in dust and ashes, while the power that made it is hastening down the back alley to a mountain nunnery for safety!

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Pekin is a beautiful golden witch, clothed in priceless garments of dusty yellow, girdled with ropes of pearls. Her eyes are of jade, and so fine is the powdered sand she sifts from her tapering fingers, that it turns the air to an amber haze. So potent is its magic spell that it fascinates and enthralls, while it repels.

For all the centuries the witch has held the silken threads which bound her millions of subjects, she has been deaf. Deaf to the cries of starvation, injustice, and cruelty. Heedless of the devastation of life by her servants. Smiling at piles of headless men. Gloating over torture when it filled her treasure-house.

Ever cruel and heartless, now she is all atremble and sick with fear of the increasing power of the mighty young giant, Revolution. She sees from afar her numbered days. She is crying for the mercy she never showed, begging for time she never granted. She



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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is a tottering despot, a dying tyrant, but still a beautiful golden witch.

I've been here two days, and my soul has been sickened by the sights of the pitiful consequences of even the rumours of war. Ah! If only the responsible ones suffered. But it's the poor, the innocent and the old who pay the price for the greed of others. In this, how akin the East is to the West! The night I came, there was a run on the Banks caused by the report that Peking was to be looted and burned. Crowds of men, women, and even children, hollow-eyed and haggard, jammed the streets before the doors of the Banks, pleading for their little all. Some of them had as much as two dollars stored away. But it was the twenty dimes that deferred low starvation. Banks kept open through the night. Officials and clerks worked to exhaustion, satisfying demands, hoping to placate the mob and avert the unthinkable results. Soldiers swarmed the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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streets with fixed bayonets. But the bloodless witch has no claim to one single heartbeat of loyalty from the unpaid wretches who wear the imperial uniform, and when, by simply tying a white handkerchief on their arm, they go over in groups of hundreds to the Revolutionists, they are only repaying treachery in its own coin.

It seemed to me as I walked among the crowds, fantastic in the flickering flames of bonfires and incandescent lights, that life had done its cruel worst to these people. She had written her bitterest tokens of suffering and woe in the deeply furrowed faces and sullenly hopeless eyes.

Earlier in the year thousands of farmers and small tradesmen had come in from the country to escape floods, famine and robber bands. Hundreds more had sold their children for a dollar or so, and for days lived on bark and leaves as they staggered toward Peking for relief.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Now thousands more are rushing from the city to the hills or to the desert, fleeing from riot and war, the strong carrying the sick, the young the old, all camping near the towering gates in the great city wall, ready to dash through when the keeper flings them open in the early morning. And through it all the merciless execution of any suspect or undesirable goes merrily on. Close by my carriage a cart passed. In it were four wretched creatures with hands and feet bound and pigtails tied together. They were on the way to a plot of crimson ground. By the side of the cart ran a ten-year-old boy, his uplifted face distorted with agony of grief. One of the prisoners was his father.

I watched the terrified masses till a man and woman of the respectable farmer class came by, with not enough rags on to hide their half-starved bodies. Between them they carried on their shoulders a bamboo pole, from which was swung a square of matting.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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On this in a rag, but clean, lay a mere skeleton of a baby with beseeching eyes turned to its mother. From its lips came a little piteous whine like the cry of a hunger-tortured kitten. Tears streamed down the woman's cheeks as she crooned and babbled to the child in a language only a tender mother knows ; but in her eyes was the look of a soul crucified with helpless suffering.

I slipped all the money I had into the straw cradle and fled to my room. I got into bed and covered up my head to shut out the horrors of the multitude, and the thing that's torturing my own heart like an eternal toothache.

But, honey, bury me deep when there isn't a smile lurking around the darkest corner—neither war nor famine can wholly eliminate the comical. Yesterday afternoon some audacious youngsters asked me to chaperon a tea-party up the river. We went in a gaily decorated boat, made tea on a Chinese



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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stove of impossible shape, and ate cake and sandwiches innumerable. Aglow with youth and its joys, reckless of danger, courting adventure, the promoters of the enterprise failed to remember that we were outside the city walls, that the gates were closed at sunset, and nothing but a written order from an official could open them. We had no such order. When it was quite dark we faced entrances doubly locked and barred. The guardian inside might have been dead for all he heeded our importunities and reckless offers of bribes. At night, outside the huge pile of brick and stone, enclosing and guarding the city from lawless bandits, life is not worth a whistle. For life is the cheapest thing in all China.

A dismayed little giggle went round the crowd of late tea-revellers as we looked up the twenty-five feet of smooth wall topped by heavy battlements. Dark shapes came out of nowhere and huddled together on the river bank, ominous, fearsome.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Just when we had about decided that our only chance was to stand on each others' shoulders and try to hack out footholds with a bread-knife, someone suggested that we try the effect of college yells on the gentlemen within. Imagine the absurdity of a dozen terrified Americans standing there in the heart of China yelling in unison for Old Eli, and Nassau, and the Harvard blue!

The effect was magical. Curiosity is one of the strongest Oriental traits, and before long the gates creaked on their hinges and a crowd of slant-eyed, pig-tailed heads peered wonderingly out. The rest was easy, and I heard a great sigh of relief as I marshalled my little group into safety.

Jack's many friends here in Peking seem determined either that I shall have a very good time or no chance for thought. Worried by disorganised business, harassed with care, they always find opportunity, not

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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only to plan for my pleasure, but to see that I have it properly attended. I wonder what they know, or if it's simply kindness to me from Jack's loyal, devoted friends? Ah well, a few days will tell. The very thought of there being *anything* for them to know is packing my heart with icicles.

A belated letter from Billy and Sada was forwarded me from Hiroshima. It's a glad-some tale they tell. Young Lochinvar, though pale with envy, would bow to Billy's direct method. I can see you, blessed Mate that you are, smiling delightedly at the grand finale of the true love-story I've been writing you these months.

Billy says that on the night it all happened he tramped up and down, waiting for me to call him, till he wore "gullies in the measly little old cow-path they call a street."

The passing moments only made him more furious. Finally he decided to walk right

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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into the house unannounced and find Sada, if he had to knock Uncle down and make kindling wood of the bamboo doll's house. But as he came into the side-garden he saw in the second storey a picture silhouetted on the white paper doors. It was Sada, and her face was buried in her hands. That settled Billy. He would save Uncle all the worry of an argument, by simply removing the cause. He whistled the old college call, then swung himself up on a fat stone lantern, and in a few minutes swung down again with a suit-case and Sada in American clothes. They caught a train to Kobe, and sailed out to the same steamer he had left in Yokohama, which had arrived in Kobe that day. Billy says for a quick and safe wedding ceremony, commend him to an enthusiastic newly arrived young missionary, and for rapid handling of red tape round a license, pin your faith to a fat and jolly American consul. So that was what the blessed rascal was doing all that afternoon, when he left me in Kioto to myself.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Can't you see success in life branded on William's freckled brow right now?

The story soon spread over the ship. Passengers and crew packed the music-room to be present at the ceremony, and joyfully drank the health of the lovers at the supper the Captain hastily ordered. Without hindrance, but half delirious with joy, they headed for Shanghai.

I shall enlighten them as to my whereabouts, as it is their intention to come Pekingwards as soon as Billy closes a contract. Evidently that young man does not intend that a little thing like a romantic honeymoon shall interfere with business. How delighted I'll be to see them, and live over my own ecstasy in them.

Beyond the power of any man is the prophecy of what may happen to official-ridden Peking. The air is surcharged with mutterings. The brutally oppressed people

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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may turn at last, rise in their fury, rend to bits all flesh their skeleton fingers can grasp.

The legations grouped round the hotel are triply guarded. The shift, shift, shift of soldiers' feet as they march the streets rubs my nerves like sandpaper.

Rest and sleep are impossible. We seem constantly on the edge of a precipice, over which, were we to fall, the fate awaiting us would reduce the tortures of Nero to pin-pricks. Yes, it would be well to get away, but the Revolutionists have the railroads, the bandits the rivers.

As I look out of my window, the salmon pink walls of the Forbidden City rise in the dusty distance. Under the flaming yellow roof of the Palace is a frail and frightened little six-year-old boy, the ruler of many millions, who, if he could, would gladly exchange his priceless crown for freedom and a bag of marbles. Good-night.

*Pekin.*

It's Sunday afternoon and pouring rain. Outside it's so drearily mournful that I keep my back turned. At least the dripping wet will secure me a quiet hour or so.

My Chinese room-boy reasons that only a sure enough somebody would have so many callers and attend so many functions, not knowing that it's only because Jack's wife will never lack where he has friends. Hence the boy haunts my door ready to serve and reap his reward. But I am sure it was only kindness that prompted him on this dreary day to set the fire in the grate to blazing and arrange the tea-table, the steaming kettle close by, and turn on all the lights. How

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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cosy it is. How home-like. Yet there is a heavy shadow over me. A black elusive horror flashes before me and is gone, defying my comprehension, leaving me sick and cold.

But it is not of this that I am going to write you. Not another wail shall you hear until I know whether or not anything has happened to justify bitterness or anger.

I do not know where Jack is. I have fairly flung myself into gaieties that still go on, despite the turmoil and unrest. I must tell you of one dinner, which of many functions was the most unique. It was a sumptuous affair given by one of the Legation officials. I wore my glory dress, the colour Jack loves best. Maybe he won't care for it so much when he sees the bill. I went in a carriage guarded on the outside by soldiers. Beside me sat a strapping European with his hip-pockets bulging suspiciously. I wasn't in the least afraid of the threatening mob which stopped us twice. Truth is, I didn't



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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much care. I could have almost welcomed an attack, just to get behind my big escort and see him clear the way. But merciful powers! Hate is a sweet and friendly word for what the masses really feel for the foreigners, whom most believe to be in league with the government. Happily nothing more serious happened than the breaking of all the carriage windows, and in the surprise that awaited me in the gorgeously appointed mansion I quite forgot that.

Who should be almost the first to greet me, but Dolly and Mr. Dolly, otherwise the Seeker, married and on their honeymoon! She was radiant, and O Mate, if you could only see the change in him! As revolutions seem to be in order, Dolly has worked a prize one on him, I think. He was positively gentle, and showed signs of the near making of a gentleman. I was glad to see them, and more than glad to see Dolly's unfeigned

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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happiness. The mournful little Prince has gone on his way to isolated Sikkam to take up his task of endless reincarnation.

Very soon I found another surprise, my friend Mr. Carson of the Rockies.

It seemed a little incongruous that the simple unlettered Irishman should have found his way into this brilliant, many countried, company, where were men who made history, held the fate of nations in their hands, and built or crumbled Empires, with women to match, regally gowned, keen of wit and wisdom.

But bless you, he was neither troubled or out of place. He was the essence of democracy, and mixed with the guests with the same innocent simplicity that he would have shown at his village church social.

He greeted me cordially and spoke enthusiastically of having been in Mukden, of Jack and his work. Neither did he forget

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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to fire off a few bombs in praise of the woman Scientist.

He said she was now in Europe. I didn't ask him how he knew—I just let my heart sing hallelujah.

I smiled when I saw that in the curious shuffling of cards he had been chosen as the dinner escort of a tall and stately Russian beauty. I watched them walk across the waxed floor and heard him say to her, "Sure if I had time I'd telegraph for me roller skates to guide ye safely over the slickness of the boards." Her answering laugh, sweet and friendly, was reassuring.

For a while it was a deadly solemn feast. The difficulty was to find topics of common interest, without stumbling over forbidden subjects. You see, Mate, times are critical, and the only way to keep out of trouble is not to tumble into it by being too wordy. By my side sat a stern-visaged leader of the Revolution, across the way a Manchu Prince.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Mr. Carson and the beauty were just opposite. I became absorbed in watching her exquisite tact in guiding the awkward hands of her partner through the silver puzzle on each side of his plate to the right eating utensil at the proper time. I saw her pleased interest in all his talk, whether it was crops, cider, or pig-tails. And for her gentle courtesy and kindness to my old friend I blessed her and wiped out a big score I had against her country. How glad Russia will be.

But the Irishman wasn't happy. Course after course had been served. With every rich course came a rare wine. Colorado shook a shaggy grey head at every bottle, though he was choking with thirst. He was a teetotaler. Whenever Boy No. 1, who served the wine, approached, he whispered, "Water." It got to "Water, please, *water*." Then threateningly, "Water, blame ye! Fetch me water!" It was vain pleading.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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At best a Chinaman is no friend to water, and when the word is flung at him with an emerald accent it fails to arrive. But ten courses without moisture bred desperation, and all at once down the length of the banquet-board went a hoarsely whispered plea, in the richest imaginable brogue :

“ Hostess, *where's* the pump? ”

It was like a sky-rocket, scattering showers of sparks on a lowering cloud. In a twinkling the heaviness of the feast was dispersed by shouts of laughter. Every one found something delightful to tell that wasn't dangerous.

We wound up by going to a Chinese theatre. When we left, after two hours of death and devastation, the demands of the drama for gore were still so great that assistants had to be called from out of the audience to change the scenery, and dead men brought to life to go on with the play.

The ever-faithful hand-boy has just given

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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me a note from Jack. He hasn't been very well, and will be in Pekin in a week or so.

I am so blissfully glad that soon I'll see the only man that ever lived for me.

After all I *am* a happy woman, even if the tangled threads of this old world do sometimes make me feel like a ball of twisted yarn.

*Pekin.*

HONEY, there is a thrill a minute. I may not live to see the finish, for the soldiers have mutinied and joined the mob, maddened with lust for blood and loot. I must tell you about it while I can. For it isn't every day one can have the fun, if fun you would call it, of seeing a fresh and daring young Republic sally up to an all-powerful dynasty, centuries old with tyranny and treasure, and say, "Now you vamoose the golden throne. It matters not where you go, but hustle, and I don't want any back talk while you are doing it."

If I wasn't so excited I might be nervous. But, Mate, when you see a people winning

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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their freedom with almost nothing to back them but plain grit, you want to sing, dance, pray, and shout all at the same time. There's no mistake about young China having a mortgage on all the surplus nerve of the country.

All day there has been terrible fighting, and I am told the streets are blocked with headless bodies and plunder that could not be carried off. The way the mob and the soldier bandits got into the city is a story that makes any tale of the Arabian Nights fade away into a dull myth.

Some years ago, a Manchu official, high in command, spied a beautiful flower-girl on the street and forthwith attached her as his private property. So great was her fascination that the tables were turned and he became the slave—till he grew tired. He not only scorned her but deserted her. Though a Manchu maid the Revolution played into her tapering fingers the oppor-



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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tunity for the sweetest revenge that ever tempted an almond-eyed beauty. It had been the proud boast of her officer master that he could resist any attacking party and hold the city royal for the Manchus. He reckoned without a woman. She knew a man outside the city walls, a leader of an organisation, half soldiers, half bandits, who thirsted for the chance to pay off countless scores against officers and private citizens inside. After a vain effort to win back her lover, the flower-girl communicated with the captain of the rebel band, who had only been deterred from entering the city by the high wall twenty feet thick. She told him to be ready on a certain night. The gates would be open. The night came. She slipped from doorway to doorway through the guarded streets till she reached the appointed place. Even the sentries unconsciously lent a hand to her plan, in seeking a tea-house fire by which to warm their half-frozen bodies. The one-time jewel of the harem, who had seldom

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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lifted her own tea-cup, tugged at the mighty gates with her slim hands till the bars were raised. And in rushed the mob. She raced to her home, decked herself in all the splendid jewels her lover had given her, stuck red roses in her black hair—then stood on a high roof and jeered at him as he fled for his life through the narrow streets.

The city is bright with the fires started by the rabble. The yellow roofs, the pink walls and the towering marble pagodas catch the reflection of the flames, making a scene of barbaric splendour that would reduce the burning of Rome to a feeble little bonfire.

The pitiful, the awful and the very funny are so intermixed that my face is fatally twisted trying to laugh and cry at the same time. Right across from my window, on the street curbing, a Chinaman is getting a haircut. In the midst of all the turmoil, hissing bullets and roaring mobs, he sits with folded hands and closed eyes as calm as a joss,

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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while a strolling barber manipulates a pair of foreign shears. For him blessed freedom lies, not in the change of Monarchy to Republic, but in shearing close to the scalp the hated badge of bondage, his pigtail.

And hear me, Mate, the first thing the looters do when they enter a house is to snatch down the telephones and take them out to burn, for as one rakish bandit explained, they were the foreign devils' talking-machines, and if left might reveal the names of the looters.

High-born ladies with two-inch feet stumble by, their calcined faces streaked with tears and fright. Grey-haired old men shiver with terror and try to hide in any small corner. Lost children and deserted ones, frantic with fear, cling to any passer-by, only to be shoved into the street and often trampled under foot. And through it all the mob runs and pitilessly mows down with

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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sword and knife as it goes, plunders and sacks until there is nothing left.

As I stood watching only a part of this horror, I heard a long-haired brother near me say, as he kept well under cover, "Inscrutable Providence!" But, my word, I don't think it is fair to lay it all on Providence.

So far the foreign Legations have been well guarded. But there is no telling how long the overworked soldiers can hold out. And when they can't the Lord help the least of us.

I am practically alone. Jack's friends are working day and night guarding their property.

Sada and Billy started for Pekin and had to take refuge in Tien Tsin, where they are shut up good and tight. I guess the Seeker found more of the plain unvarnished truth in the East than he bargained for. He and Dolly have disappeared.



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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I don't know just where Jack is. I wish he was with me. I am worried because he is not well. I know he will come as soon as he can force his way through the fighting. But what may happen in the meantime? Nobody undresses these nights and few go to bed. My one comfort and bodyguard is the room-boy. I asked him which side he was on, and without a change of feature he answered, "Manchu Chinaman alle samee bimeby. Missy I make you tea."

I have a suspicion that he sleeps across my door for his own or my protection—I don't know which. But sometimes when the howls of fighters reach me I turn on the light and sit by my fire to shake off a few shivers, trying to make believe that Jack is near me. Then a soft tap comes at my door and a gentle voice says, "Missy I make you nice tea now." Shades of Pekoe! I'll drown if this keeps up much longer. He come in, brews the leaves, then drops on his haunches and

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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looks into the fire. Not by the quiver of an eyelash does he give any sign, no matter how close the shots and shouts. Inscrutable and immovable, he seems a thing utterly apart from the tremendous upheaval of his country. And yet for all anybody knows he may be chief plotter of the whole movement. His unmoved serenity is about the most soothing thing in all this Hades. I am not really and truly afraid. Jack is coming, and just over there, right above the crimson glare of the burning city, gently but surely floats the Stars and Stripes.

Good-night, beloved Mate. I won't believe I am dead till it happens. Besides I simply could not die and Jack not here.

*Pekin.*

I ONCE stood by the side of a Japanese girl while she watched her soldier lover die.

He turned his greying face to her and pleaded, "Do not cry!"

Her trembling lips replied, "I am not crying."

"But," he whispered, "I see the many tears in your eyes!"

"Ah, dear friend, they are not the tears of my eyes, they are the tears of my heart!"

Come close, Mate dear. Give me of your strength. Be near with your clearer vision and your deep understanding. For if I am

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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right, I am worsted by the battle and I am too weary of the struggle to resist, and will gladly exchange life for oblivion.

Jack is long overdue, and as yet there has been no sign of him or word. To-day while watching at the window, where I've waited for so many hours in vain, I fancied I heard two men connect Jack's name with that of the English woman and laugh meaningly when they did it. On seeing me they walked rapidly away.

If I heard aright Jack and the Scientist are still together, and the hymn of hallelujah that sprang from my heart when my kindly old friend, Mr. Carson, said she had long since gone on her way, is hushed for ever.

What does it all mean, Mate? Is it possible that the deep shadow that has hung over me for weeks is taking on a hideous but tangible shape? Can it be that all the joyful years have been but a daydream to make the waking reality more insupportable?



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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Is it only that the black terrors of the Revolution are mocking me? Or has life really tricked me and played me false?

When Jack came to claim me I truly believed that the years the locusts had eaten were to be restored, that all my lost longings were to be found again.

To-night I wonder if a lost happiness can ever be restored. I wonder if the misery of a hurt love does not so eat into the heart that there must remain an everlasting bitter memory. It may sleep, but does it ever die? Is it not ever ready to awaken and sting at the lightest touch? The pall of the old troubled years is thick and heavy, but the thing that faces me makes the dark days of the past hardly worth remembering. How the changing years pass before me like moving pictures! The slow, heavy ones weighted with heartbreak and shattered illusions. The happy ones with Jack, so full of sunshine and sparkle that they fairly blind

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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me with their beauty as they race by. And now the last one so confused with uncertainty that it's only a blur of dark and troubled shadows.

Pekin is ablaze. Across the barricaded streets, through my locked door and barred windows, the roar of the triumphant mob comes nearer and nearer, and with it the ever-increasing danger of being torn in pieces. But far above the frenzied shouts is the shrill and cruel note of doubt.

If it had to come to this, Mate, why was I not left to my work and my loneliness and to the thorn-lined road, every crooked twist of which I knew by heart. Why did Jack ever tempt me with the beauty of his manhood and the joy of his love? Why did he ever come for me if it was only . . . No! Mate, I'll *not* believe it. Jack came for me because there has never been but one woman for him. And not till I hear it from his own lips, not before I see it with my own eyes, will I truly

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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believe him disloyal by look or deed. I'll defy rumours and long delay. I'll cleanse my heart of every doubt by all the tender memories of his love, and though the dark waters close over me, I'll still believe in him, be glad for every day of happiness with him, and thank God for every hour of companionship in the little home where we lived at the heart of things.

The cries of the looting bandits have grown faint in the distance. For the moment the danger has passed. All the flames, too, have died away, and out of nowhere a great sense of rest and security has come and softly settled down. Forgive me, Mate. To none but your understanding soul could I have shown the tears of my heart. Don't worry about me. The storm is over. Once again the Pilot has brought me into port, a little battered and slightly wobbly—but safe.





*Nankow, China, March 1912.*

MATE, in all the illimitable bleakness, nothing is so desolate as I. News of Jack's desperate illness has laid waste my heart as the desert wind blasts life.

The telegram reached me in Pekin last night. Jack has typhus fever and the disease is nearing the crisis. I have read the message over and over, trying to find between the lines some faint glimmer of hope ; but I can get no comfort from the noncommittal words except the fact that Jack is still alive. I am on my way to the terminus of the railroad, whence the message was sent. I came this far by train, only to find all regular traffic stopped by order of the Government. The

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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line may be needed for the escape of the Imperial Family from Peking if the Palace is threatened by the Revolutionists.

Orders had been given that no foreigner should leave the Legation enclosure. I bribed the room-boy to slip me through the side streets and dark alleys to an outside station. I must go the rest of the distance by cart when the road is possible, by camel or donkey when not. Nothing seems possible now. Everything within sight looks as if it had been dead for centuries, and the people walking around have just forgotten to be buried.

I am wild with impatience to be gone, but neither bribes nor threats will hurry the coolies, who take their time harnessing the donkeys and the camels.

A ring of ossified men, women, and children has formed about me, staring with unblinking eyes, till I feel as if I was full of peep-holes. This is not life, for neither youth nor

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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joy nor sorrow has ever passed this way. The tiniest emotion would shrivel if it dared begin to live. Maybe they are better so. But then, but then, *oh Mate*, they have never known what love is.

How true it is that one big heartache withers up all the little ones, and the joy of years as well! What trivial silliness the splendid dinners, luncheons, and teas, since I am facing this terror. How frail a flower the happiness I held so surely mine. But what does it matter? What does it matter even that the message was sent by the English woman? What does anything matter, except that Jack is ill and I must go to him, though my body is racked with the roughness of travel. The end of the ancient road holds the end of love and life for me. Around the sad old world I am stretching out my arms to you, *Mate*, for the courage to face whatever comes, and for your love which has never failed me in the dark hours.





*Kalgan.*

SUCH wild unbelievable things have happened.

After twenty miles of intolerable shaking on the back of a camel, my battered body fell off at the last stopping-place, which happened to be here. There was no hotel. But three blessed European boys living at this place, agents for a big tobacco firm, took me into their little home. They have served me and cared for me as only sons who have not forgotten their mothers could.

On that awful night I came, while forcing food on me they told me that Jack had stopped with them on his way out to the

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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desert, where he was to complete his work for the Government. He was to go part of the distance with the English woman, who, with her camels and her guides, was traveling to the Siberian railroad. The next they heard was that the whole caravan had returned. Four days out Jack had been taken ill. The only available shelter was an old monastery, about a mile from the village. To this he had been moved.

My hosts opened a window and pointed to a far-away light, high in the sky. It was like the flicker of a match in a vast cave of darkness. They told me wonderful things of the rooms in the monastery, cut in the solid rock of the mountain side, and of the dwarf priest who kept it.

They lied beautifully and cheerfully when they said somebody had pronounced Jack's illness malaria. Possibly it was only a chill. Maybe just indigestion. All the time in

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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their hearts they knew that Jack had the barest chance to live through the night.

The woman doctor had nursed him straight through, permitting no one else near. The dwarf priest brought her supplies.

Her last message for the day had been that the crisis would soon be passed. All depended upon sleep.

Even now something grips my throat when I remember how those dear boys worked to divert me until my strength revived. They rigged up a battered steamer chair with furs and bath robes, and put me in it, promising, that as soon as I was rested, they would see what could be done to get me up to the monastery. But I was not to worry. Then they all set about seeing that I had no time to think. Each took his turn in telling me marvellous tales of the life in that wild country. One boy brought in the new litter of puppies, begging me carefully

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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to choose a name for each. The two ponies were trotted out before the door and put through their pranks in the half-light of a dim lantern.

They showed me the treasures of their bachelor life, the family photographs and the various little nothings which link isolated lives to home and love. They even assured me that they had had *the* tablecloth and napkins washed for my coming. Household interests exhausted, they began to talk of boyhood days. Their quiet voices lulled me. From exhaustion I slept. When I awoke my watch said one o'clock. The house was heavy with sleeping stillness.

Through my window, far away, the dim light wavered. It seemed to be signalling me. My decision was quick. I would go, and alone. If I called, my hosts might try to dissuade me. I would not listen. For life or for death, I was going to Jack. My heart was hot with pain, my soul sickened at



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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the thought that another woman was with him, caring for him, nursing him. So surely as I reached that light, I would show her my right and my scorn. The very thought lent me strength and gave cunning stealthiness to my feet. A high wall was around the house, but, thank heaven, they'd forgotten to lock the gate. Soon I was in the deep-rutted street, shut in on either side by hovels, low and crouching close together in their pitiful poverty. There was nothing to guide me save that distant speck of flame. Further on, I heard the rush of water and made out the dim lines of an ancient bridge. Half-way across I stumbled. From the heap of rags my feet had struck came moans and by the sound of it awful curses. It was a handless leper. I saw the stumps as they flew at me. Sick with horror I fled and found an open place.

The light still beckoned. The way was heavy with high, drifted sand. The courage

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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of despair goaded me to the utmost effort. Forced to pause for breath, I found and leaned against a post. It was a telegraph pole. In all the blackness of immeasurable loneliness it was the solitary sign of an inhabited world. And the only sound was the wind, as it whined through the wires in the sadness of minor chords. A camel caravan came by, soft-footed, silent and inscrutable. I waited till it passed out to the mysteries of the desert beyond the range of hills.

I began again to climb the path. The rocks were jagged and sharp. They cut my shoes to ribbons and tore my dress wherever it caught.

I will never tell you how long it took me. It was lighter when I crept through a broken wall and found myself in a stone courtyard, with gilded shrines and grinning Buddhas. One image, more hideous than the rest, with eyes like glow-worms, untangled its crossed legs and came towards me. I shook with

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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fright. But it was only the dwarf priest, a monstrosity of flesh and blood who kept the temple. I pointed to the light which seemed to be hanging to the side of the rock above. He slowly shook his head, then rested it on his hands and closed his eyes. I pushed him aside and painfully crawled up the shallow stone stairs, and found a door at the top. I opened it. Lying on a stone bed was Jack, white and still. A woman leaned over him, with her hand on his wrist.

Her face was heavily lined with a long life of sorrow. On her head a crown of snow-white hair! She raised her hand for silence. I fell at her feet a shaking lump of misery.

I cannot write of it, for I cannot live through it again, Mate. I dare not let my mind return to those remaining hours of agony when every second seemed the last for Jack and for me. But morning dawned, and with the miracle of a new-born day came the miracle gift of life.

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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When Jack opened his eyes and feebly stretched out his hand to me, my singing heart gave thanks to God.

The crisis was passed. It wasn't typhus. It was poison out of a tin can plain and simple. And the hateful science I believed was taking Jack from me, in the skilful hands of a good woman, gave him back to me.

The accumulated scorn I was to pour on her head stung me with its own venom. The one comfort left me in the humiliation of my petty unreasoning jealousy—yes, Mate, I *had* been jealous—was to try and make clean my soul by telling her the whole story.

At first I hid all I felt under much dignity. It wouldn't work, for she—her name was Edith Bowden—opened to me the door of her secret garden, wherein lay the sweet and holy memories of her lover, dead in the long ago.

For fifty long and lonesome years she had unfalteringly held before her the vision of



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## THE LADY MARRIED

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her young sweetheart and his work, and through them she had toiled to make real his ideals.

The splendiddness of Jack appealed to the big soul of the woman, and she gave of her best.

And I? Oh, Mate!

That was about the time I began to get restless. But how was I to know that her eyes held the light of a soul that lives in the sorrowful world of might-have-been?

Why didn't somebody tell me that blessed doctor-lady who fought every inch of the way for Jack's life wouldn't have known a fashion-plate if it had been tied to her. There *are* times when people don't talk enough—even about angel women scientists!

I take it all back, Mate. A career that makes such women as this is a beautiful and awesome thing.

In spite of all my pleadings to come with

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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us, Miss Bowden started once again on her lonely way across the wind-swept plains, back to Europe and her work, leaving me with a never-to-be-forgotten humility of spirit and an homage in my heart that never before have I paid a woman. I am too polite to say it, but I have had a taste of the place you spell with four letters. Also of heaven.

Just now, with Jack's thin hand held safely in mine, I am hovering around the doors of Paradise, in the house of the boys of Kalgan. If you could see the dusty little Chinese-Mongolian village hanging on the upper lip of the mouth of the Gobi desert you would think it a strange place to find bliss. But joy can beautify sand and Sodom.

Yesterday my hosts made me take a ride out into the desert. Oh, Mate, in spots these stretches of glittering golden sands are sublime. My heart was so light, and the air so rare, it was like flying through sunlit

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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space on a legless horse. Life, or what answers to it, has been going on in the same way since thousands of years before Pharaoh went on that wild chase to the Red Sea. Every minute I expected to see Abraham and Sarah trailing along the sands with their flocks and their families hunting a place to stake out a claim. And Noah somewhere on a near-by sand-hill, while the two by two's fed below.

Jack is getting fat laughing at me. But Jack never was a lady, and does not know what havoc imagination, memory of past pain and old wounds and the spell of the East and the horrors of a revolution can play with a loving but lonesome wife. . . .

And take it from me, beloved, he never will. Nothing is gained by exposing all your follies.

He sends love to you. So do I—from the joyful heart of a woman whose most terrible troubles never happened.





*Pekin, May 1912.*

GLORIOUS spring sunshine, Mate, with the whole world wrapped in a tender haze.

It is nothing but the dust, but everything has little rainbows around it and the very air seems studded with jewels.

Soldiers are still marching. Flags are flying, drums are thumping, and it is all to the tune of victory for the Revolutionists. And Jack is well.

To me Peking is like that first morning of Eve's in the Garden of EDEN.

To-night we are having our last dinner here.

The boys came down from Kalgan with me. They insisted that business called them. I am sure they did it only to help me, for with equal ardour, when I caught them at it, they declared that sleeping on the floor was the healthiest fun in the world. I want to

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## THE LADY MARRIED

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hurrah every time I see them. It takes something more even than youth and splendid courage to carve a way to success out of dust and ever-moving sands.

Billy and Sada are with us, still with the first glow of the enchanted garden over them. To-morrow the four of us turn our faces toward home, the most beautiful spot this side of heaven. The happy runaways go to Nebraska, Jack and I to the little roost we left behind in Kentucky.

There goes the music for dinner. It's something about "Dreamy Love." Love isn't a dream, Mate. Not the kind I know. It's all of life.

I know what they are *really* playing!

"Breathe but one breath,  
Rose beauty above,  
And all that was death  
Grows life, grows love—  
Grows love!"

P.S.—East, West, Home *is* best—with Jack.











